

ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICE REPORT

June 30, 2008

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**Submitted to
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
By
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Division of Children and Family Services
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The Mission of the Division

DCFS is committed to child protection and family preservation. Every child is entitled to grow up in a permanent family. The primary and preferred way of achieving this goal is to provide families experiencing turmoil with services to prevent the need to place children outside their homes. When a child must be separated from the family, DCFS will provide a healthy and safe environment and will make appropriate and timely efforts to provide services to reunite the family. DCFS will provide appropriate homes for children who cannot be reunited with their families.

Our mission is to:

- protect children;
- maintain families, if this is appropriate, with the child's health and safety always considered paramount;
- provide quality services within available resources which enable families to maximize their potential and increase their abilities;
- preserve and enhance human dignity and worth;
- prevent or reduce the need for services.

DCFS Beliefs and Specific Beliefs

- Every child matters.
 - Child safety comes first
 - Children deserve to thrive not just survive
 - We must never give up on a child
 - Children deserve a forever family
 - No child is unadoptable
- People need family
 - People do best in a supportive families
 - As a family function improves, individual outcomes improve
 - Families must be involved in the decisions about children in care
 -
- Strong communities build strong families
 - People are best supported by their own communities
 - People belong in community
 - DHS can't do it alone.

- Our job is to empower people to help themselves
 - People need skills to succeed
 - Jobs empower
 - We have high expectations of our contractors, our clients and ourselves
 - Everyone has strengths that can be built on
 - No individual or system should limit any person's potential
 - Our services should promote self worth, dignity and respect
- We have a responsibility to provide services that work.
 - Family centered services are most effective
 - Coordinated, consistent services promote better outcomes
 - Individuals and families should have access to appropriate resources
 - Early and appropriate intervention promotes successful outcomes
 - Services must be evaluated and based on outcomes measured in order to promote improved practice
 - Substance abuse services are essential and will be addressed.

1. Service Descriptions

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

STRATEGIC WORK PLANS

Adoption Services

Foster Care Services

Independent Living Services

In-Home Services (Social Service Aides)

Protective Services

Staffing

Supportive Services

ADOPTION SERVICES

OUTCOMES

Belief: Every child matters.

Specific belief: Children deserve a forever family.

- Outcome: Children that cannot be reunited with their families are successfully placed in adoptive families.

Source of information: National Standard – A state meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who exited foster care during the year under review to a finalized adoption, 32% or more children exited care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from the home.

Status: Statewide average for the period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 32.27%

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 – Increase the number of approved adoptive families.

Objective 1 – Recruit and retain the number of families willing to adopt children nine years of age and older by 10% by June 30, 2009.

Task1: Tasks are identified in the Adoption Recruitment Plan. Completion dates from 2005 – 2009.

Task 2: Implement Adoption Recruitment Response Team (RRT). Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in 2005 and ongoing.

Task 3: Evaluate the effectiveness of Response Team. Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in 2005 and ongoing.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006---annually thereafter

Status

A statewide adoption recruitment plan has been developed for the period FFY 2005 – 2009. The plan is based upon three recruitment strategies: general recruitment, targeted recruitment, and child specific. Refer to the report on the adoption recruitment plan.

The Adoption Response Team (RRT) for Arkansas remains effective. It was implemented in February 2005. The Children's Bureau, the Collaboration to AdoptUSKids, continues to administer the program. The contract remains with One Church, One Child in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. 220 new inquiries from families in Arkansas have been referred directly from the RRT during from July, 2007 to June, 2008. Adoption Specialists and Adoption Supervisors receive inquiries directly from the RRT. DCFS staff met with One Church, One Child staff on March 1, 2007 to review and to identify successes and challenges. As a result of the meeting, the decision was made to have RRT staff complete the on line inquiry form on the DHHS/DCFS website rather than contacting the Adoption Specialist and Adoption Supervisor by email. This change was implemented to provide families a more prompt invitation (letter) from the Adoption Specialist to attend an orientation meeting. RRT staff will evaluate this change and advise us about its effectiveness. RRT staff recommended the invitation (letter) to attend an orientation meeting also be available in Spanish. The Adoption Services Unit Manager will initiate a recommendation. There is no form letter for statewide use at this time and individual areas send their own invitations with appropriate DCFS staff during the next quarter to address the request. RRT staff reported in the meeting that DHS/DCFS management staff is answering RRT staff's questions for families in a timely manner. RRT staff makes contact with the family every two weeks until pre-service training and the adoption home study are completed. Afterwards, they contact the family every six months until placement occurs. Primary media contacts in Arkansas were provided to RRT staff during the March meeting, and they plan to contact more media outlets to air and print information prepared by AdoptUSKids to recruit foster and adoptive families. RRT staff was asked to forward their quarterly reports to adoption management staff. The reports are being received.

CHRIS Net Reports developed in SFY 2006 for monitoring the inquiries and approval of families willing to adopt children nine years of age and older are in CHRIS. They are not yet available for SFY 2007. Contact will be made with CHRIS staff during this next quarter to request the same reports for SFY 2007 and for it to be ongoing.

The Adoption Services Unit in Central Office processed 2691 inquiries from the DCFS web site of waiting children from May, 2007 – June, 2008.

The general adoption brochure has been translated into Spanish, but not printed. A determination must be made about what other adoption brochures need to be translated. This task will be completed during the next quarter and estimates of printing costs will be secured. This task was not completed. The general adoption brochure is being redesigned and the English and Spanish versions will be released after the redesign.

An adoption recruitment planning committee has not been formed. This committee will be formed and an initial meeting will be held within the next three months. An Adoption Services Unit staff continues to be a member of the foster parent recruitment committee.

Request was made to CHRIS staff to add “AdoptUSKids” and Adoption.com to the section on the DHHS/DCFS inquiry screen in CHRIS as a reason for what prompted a family to seek information about adoption and/or foster parenting. This change has not yet been made.

Objective 2 – Recruit and retain the number of families willing to adopt African American children by 10% by June 30, 2009.

Task 1: Tasks are identified in the Adoption Recruitment Plan. Completion dates from 2005 – 2009.

Task 2: Implement the Foster/Adoption Inquiry Process. Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in 2005.

Task 3: Track and determine outcome of inquiries. Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed by 2005 and ongoing.

Task 4: Develop a report that compares inquiries with approved homes (CHRIS). Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in 2006 and utilized for all four quarters.

Task 5: Identify effectiveness of the inquiry process and develop corrective action plan if necessary. Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in January 2006.

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 3, Action Step 3.5, Implement and monitor the statewide adoption recruitment plan in order to increase homes for African American children waiting for an adoptive home and for other waiting children.
Completion of task by September 30, 2006 – annually thereafter.

Status

Refer to the report on the adoption recruitment plan.

CHRIS Net Reports developed for SFY 2006 for monitoring the inquiries and approval of families willing to adopt African American children are available. They are not yet available in CHRIS for SFY 2007. Contact will be made with CHRIS staff during this next quarter to request the same reports for SFY 2007 and for the reports to be ongoing.

Goal 2 – Reduce the length of time from TPR to finalization or adoption.

Objective 1 – Reduce the length of time from TPR to pre-adoptive placement by 10% by June 30, 2009.

Task 1: Identify time for TPR to placement into pre-adoptive home in a report from CHRIS and develop a baseline. Completion date September 30, 2006.

Task 2: Reduce by 2% a year. Completion date September 30, 2006.

Task 3: Expand opportunities by implementation of the following: Adoption Recruitment Plan, Adoption Opportunities Grant, Foster Care Recruitment Plan, AdoptUSKids. Completion by September 30, 2006. Completed implementation of the plans and programs prior to September 30, 2006, annually thereafter.

Completion of all task – ongoing, annual results of reports produced from these efforts currently in place all tasks due by June 30, 2009.

Source of information: CHRIS reports.

Status

The report that was initially requested for a baseline and received in January 2006 needed revisions. **Data was insufficient because it did not capture all the pre-adoptive placements for foster parent adoptions in 2005. This was due to non-entry of these pre-adoptive placement dates in CHRIS. Another revised report has been requested from CHRIS after Adoption Specialists re-entered data on foster parent adoptions. It has not been received. Another request will be made during this next quarter. Recommend date of completion of Task 1 and 2 be extended to August 31, 2008.**

A workgroup will proceed with assessing the barriers to reducing the time from TPR to pre-adoptive placement.

Task 3

Refer to reports that address the foster care and adoption recruitment plans.

The Adoption Opportunities Grant, Adoption Coalition Project, has 12 fully functional Coalitions in nine of the ten DCFS management Areas. The Program Manager for the project reported that the Coalitions spent most of their time from January – March 2007 recruiting new members. The following recruitment activities occurred:

- **Heart Gallery Events---**Heart Gallery events have been numerous A Statewide Adoption Coalition Heart Gallery was held in Little Rock, November 11-16-07 in honor of National Adoption Month All five adoption field areas participated The Jonesboro Adoption Coalition's Heart Gallery in the Northeast Area is web based and receives daily inquiries. They also maintain a physical traveling Heart Gallery. Other Northeast Area Heart Galleries include White County in Area IX, Crittenden County in Area X. The remaining areas have physical traveling Heart Galleries. Area VI began weekly Heart Gallery Events 02-09-08 and are currently scheduled thru June 22, 2008 in 22 different locations. Garland County Adoption Coalition in January, February, and March, Area III. Southeast Area. Northwest Area has two Heart Galleries, one in the Washington /Benton County area and one in the Sebastian County Area. These Galleries have made 10 appearances. Northeast area includes
 - Television News segment Area VI, Area
 - Adoption Picnics : Areas VI, VIII, XIX, X
 - Quarterly magazine featuring a waiting child Area VIII
 - County Fair Area VIII

Refer to comments about the Recruitment Response Team (RRT) under Goal 1, Objective 1.

In addition DCFS adoption staff is involved in the following recruitment activities:

- The C.A.L.L. (Children of Arkansas Loved for a Lifetime) was established as a result of the Fellowship Summit held during the previous quarter (new faith based initiative in Pulaski County, Area VI). Approximately, seventeen churches are involved to recruit foster and adoptive families. Meetings have occurred with DCFS and key members of the project. Plans include: recruiting foster and adoptive families within the involved churches, providing pre-service training to adoptive applicants, conducting home studies, and providing supportive services to families after placement such as respite. Individuals with appropriate credentials within the churches are being recruited to provide the pre-service training (Foster Adopt Pride) and conduct home studies. Members of the project have produced a video of waiting DHHS/DCFS children, and it is being shown to the church members during special meetings that focus on foster parenting and adoption.
- DHHS/DCFS was awarded a \$65,000.00 grant from the Dave Thomas Foundation, Wendy's Wonderful Kids to serve Pulaski County, Area VI. **-This grant has been renewed for the second year and a recruiter for this project has been hired.**
- **Information booth about adoption and foster parenting at the Black Expo event in Pulaski County, Area VI.**
- **Area Child Abuse Awareness Conferences**
- **Each of the five Adoption areas coordinated activities for National Adoption Month**

Objective 2 – Reduce the length of time from pre-adoptive placement to finalization by 10% June 30, 2009.

Task 1: Identify time for finalization of foster parent adoptions. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Task 2: Assess the barriers of the foster parent adoption process. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Task 3: Merge the current foster home study and adoption home study into one process/format. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Task 4: Make necessary changes to policy and practice based on the above. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Source of information: CHRIS reports

Status

Efforts continue to secure more accurate data to complete Task 1 for SFY 2005. A report is now ongoing in CHRIS Net Reports. It does not show all the foster parent adoptions for SFY 2005. Insufficient data entry described in Goal 2, Objective 1, Task 1 and 2, impact on this task as well. For the last quarter, the report for SFY 2005 provided an average time between pre-adoptive placement to finalization to be 3 months. The report conveys 4 months at this time for SFY 2005. CHRIS staff will be contacted during the next quarter to determine if the report for SFY 2005 has been refreshed to reflect additional data. For SFY 2006, the average length of time from pre-adoptive placement to finalization is 3 months.

Tasks 2, 3, and 4 are were not completed at the last review . The workgroup for Task 3 to merge the foster and adoption home study processes/formats had its initial meeting during the last quarter (November 29, 2006). Four workgroup meetings were held from January 2007 – March 2007. In February, the workgroup began meeting twice a month, and in March, hours for the meetings were extended from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. The process is very labor intensive. Much discussion has occurred about the two processes. Policy/procedures, licensing requirements, and various publications have been assessed and discussed. Workgroup members completed the review of most of the forms and made recommendations for merging them. The remaining forms will be reviewed and merged during the next quarter. The two home study formats have been distributed to workgroup members and plans to merge them will begin in April 2007. The separate workgroup for assessing Task 2, barriers to the foster parent adoption, will be initiated prior to June 30, 2007. Recommend completion for Task 2 and 3 be extended to August 31, 2007. Recommend completion for Task 4 be extended to October 31, 2007.

These tasks are now completed. The workgroup identified the greatest barrier to foster parent adoption as the separate approval process. The merged foster/adoptive home approval process was effective date is May 20, 2008 and will be Training on the new merged process was conducted in all 10 DCFS area s May 14 – May 19, 2008. There are plans now for an online application.

Objective 3 – Increase permanency for children waiting to be adopted by 10% by June 30, 2009.

Task 1: Monitor the results of the Adoption Recruitment Plan. Completion dates from 2005 – 2009.

Completion of tasks: Refer to dates in strategic plan.

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 3, Action Step 3.5, Implement and monitor the statewide adoption recruitment plan in order to increase homes for African American children waiting for an adoptive home and for other waiting children.

Source of information: CHRIS reports.

Status

Refer to the report for the adoption recruitment plan.

Foster Care

Belief: Every Child Matters.

- Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First
 - Outcome: Preventing abuse and neglect in out of home placements by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: National Standard - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children in foster care in the State during the period under review, the percentage of children who were the subject of report of child maltreatment determined to be true by a foster parent or facility staff is 0.57% or less.

Status: Statewide average for the period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 0.35%

- Specific belief: Children deserve to thrive not just survive
 - Outcome: Children in care move less and meet the national standard or above by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: National Standard - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who have been in foster care less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal, 86.7% or more children had no more than two placement settings.

Status: Statewide average of period under review (06/01/07-5/31/08) is 66.83%

- Outcome: Physical, medical, and emotional health needs are met (immunizations up to date, medication management maintained, check ups, weight/eye, and dental, grooming)
 - Physical Health of Child target will be substantially achieved by:
 - 1st year 90% or by June 30, 2005
 - 2nd year 92% or by June 30, 2006
 - 3rd year 93% or by June 30, 2007
 - 4th year 94% or by June 30, 2008
 - 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 22 Physical Health of child

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-5/31/08) is 92.86%

- Mental Health Needs of Child target will be substantially achieved by:
 - 1st year 80% or by June 30, 2005
 - 2nd year 83% or by June 30, 2006
 - 3rd year 85% or by June 30, 2007
 - 4th year 90% or by June 30, 2008
 - 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 23 Mental Health of Child

Status: Statewide average of period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 92.86%

- Outcome: Children in care have improved educational performance

Educational Services will be substantially achieved by

1st year 85%, or by June 30, 2005

2nd year 88%, or by June 30, 2006

3rd year 91%, or by June 30, 2007

4th year 93% or by June 30, 2008

5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 21

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-5/31/08) is 90.74%

➤ Specific Belief: Children deserve a forever family

- Outcome: Children are successfully reunited with their family to meet or exceed national standard by June 30, 2009.

Source of Information: National Standard: - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, 76.2% or more children were reunified in less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal from home.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-5/31/08) is 82.74%

- Outcome: Siblings are placed together, unless it is clinically inappropriate to do so.

Placement with siblings will be substantially achieved by

1st year 85%, or by June 30, 2005

2nd year 87%, or by June 30, 2006

3rd year 90%, or by June 30th, 2007

4th year 92.5% or by June 30, 2008

5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information – QSPR Item 12

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 95.08%

❖ Belief: Strong Communities Build Strong Families

➤ Specific Belief: People belong in healthy community

- Outcome: Children are placed in the least restrictive placement, in close proximity to their familiar environment.

Proximity of placement of child will be substantially achieved by

1st year 81%, or by June 30, 2005

2nd year 85%, or by June 30, 2006

3rd year 90%, or by June 30, 2007

4th year 92% or by June 30, 2008
5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 11

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 98.86%

- ❖ Belief: Our Job is To Empower people To Help Themselves
 - Specific Belief: Our services should promote self-worth, dignity and respect.
 - Outcome: Parents and age appropriate child are involved in the development of the case plan

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be substantially achieved by

70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005
77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006
84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007
91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008
95% 5th year. or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 18

2nd source will be the Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 76.72%.

Foster Care Goals and Objectives

Goal 1- Recruit, train and retain foster families in sufficient numbers to meet the needs.

Objective 1 - Implement statewide coordinated recruitment plan

Task 1 - PIP tasks for action step 3.1 increases by 10% the number of foster parents recruited who are willing to accept children that enter foster care and meet their special needs. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

Completed, the agency continues to address the need to raise the level of awareness of the need for more foster homes and to promote the Division's recruitment efforts. There were 354 new foster homes recruited during SFY 2006. This was 34 more than the goal of 320 homes for the state fiscal year. This number resulted in a compliance rate of 111 percent, thirty-eight percentage points higher than SFY 2005.

Task 2 – Evaluate the effectiveness of the statewide recruitment plan. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

Completed, the agency foster parent recruitment committee evaluated the effectiveness of the statewide recruitment plan by July 2007. The committee determined that the statewide recruitment plan should be revised to better meet the states need for to recruit more foster homes that will care for the population of children that are coming into the foster system.

Task 3 - Analyze the Foster Family Needs Assessment grid results with CHRIS approval of foster homes. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

Completed, the Family Needs Assessment tool was redesigned to better assist specific county recruitment and it in current use. Since that time, the tool was deemed ineffective by some DCFS staff. Also, the Division will explore other assessment tools as well as utilize data that is available in CHRIS.

Task 4 – Evaluate the Areas’ recruitment plans and retention of foster homes. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

Completed, each area has developed a foster parent recruitment and retention plan, and has submitted to the foster care recruitment committee. The foster parent recruitment committee has evaluated the Area’ plans to ensure that they were effective and recommendations were made to the Community Services Section on how to improve the plans.

Completion of tasks by: September 30, 2007

Objective 2 - Provide pre-service and in-service training for foster parents in a timely and flexible manner.

Task 1 – Continue to conduct the quarterly meetings, regional meetings and PDT meetings regarding homes. Completion by: September 30, 2006

Task 2 – Provide status reports on the results of the meetings. Completion by: September 30, 2006

Task 3 – If issues are discussed and recommendations are needed, develop and implement as necessary. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

Completed, DCFS continues to have quarterly meetings that involve Midsouth, LARP staff, Community Support and Community Service Staff. The meetings are set up to identify issues and problems with pre-service and in-service trainings for foster parents. Midsouth

prepares minutes of the meetings. Also, new policies and/or procedures have been developed based on the recommendations made by DCFS and Midsouth.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006 – on-going

Objective 3 - Formal Kinship Care Program will be developed.

Task 1 – Identify options for developing a Kinship Care program and include informal and the out of home placements RT children. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

Completed, the provisional relative foster home policy has been in place for almost two years (July 2005). In SFY 2006, there were 134 children placed in relative care. During the first two quarters of SFY 2007, there have already been 223 children placed in relative care thus the new Provision Relative policy appears to be working well.

Task 2 – Develop recommendations for subsidizing guardianship. Completion by September 30, 2008

Status

Completed, the Arkansas Subsidized Guardianship Act was established in 2007 legislative session. A child is eligible for a guardianship subsidy if the Department of Human Services determines the following: 1. A child has been removed from the parent(s) as a result of a judicial determination/contrary to the welfare of the child 2. DHS is responsible for the placement and care of the child. 3. Reunification or adoptions are not the appropriate permanency options. 4. The child has special needs. 5. A bond exists between the child and perspective guardian is committee to caring for the child. 6. The amount will be on a case by case basis. 7. Contingent upon funding.

Task 3 – Develop recommendations for a kinship care program in DCFS for executive staff approval. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status:

Completed, the Provisional Foster Home policy has been established as the Division's Formal Kinship Care program. The policy allows placing a child in a provisional relative Foster Home if a relative is identified and it is in the best interest of the child. A child may be placed in the home of a relative on a provision basis for up to six (6) months pending the relative's home being opened as a regular foster home. If the relative opts to have his or her home opened as a provisional Foster Home, the relative shall not be paid a board payment until the relative meets all of the foster home requirements and it's opened as a regular foster home.

Task 4 – Implement the recommendations approved by executive staff. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status: Completed, this policy has been in implementation for almost two years.

Objective 4 – Ensure adequate placement options for children in other placements.

Task 1 – Identify demographics about children placed in other settings. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status:

Completed, the DCFS 1st Quarterly performance Report Card for SFY 2007 was reviewed and more foster children (2,088) were placed in DCFS foster home (59%) at the end of the first quarter than in any other type of foster care placement. Children between the ages of 2 to 5 (641) represented the largest age group in foster care. Thirteen percent (13%) of children were placed in residential facility and children between the ages of 12 to 18 represented the largest age group of children (295) in this placement. Eight percent (8%) of the children (268) were placed in therapeutic foster home and children between the ages of 6-11 represented the largest group. The Foster Care Committee will continue to review CHRIS reports that demographics about children placed in other settings.

Task 2 – Identify the kinds of services that are effective. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status:

Completed, the Division created a workgroup to assess appropriate placement for foster children. The workgroup assessed and outlined the current placement procedures. Specifically the perspective of the process as viewed by a family service worker, placement specialist, area manager, and central office-Behavioral Treatment Unit. The following recommendation was made:

- a. Increase the number of placement available for sibling groups
- b. Create shelters specifically designed to serve teens
- c. Increase the number of Therapeutic Foster Home beds and Emergency Shelter beds
- d. Hire staff psychiatrist to assess foster children
- e. Create Specialized foster home (there is a DCFS workgroup currently exploring this issue)
- f. More Adoption specialist is needed to expedite the adoption process and free space in foster homes for other foster children. A problem noted was the inability to timely prepare and to process Disclosure packets.

Task 3 – Identify other placement options currently not available in Arkansas i.e. receiver homes, assessment facilities and develop recommendations for consideration. Completion by September 30, 2008

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2008

Status: Completed, please see status for task # 2

Goal 2 - Ensure health and safety of child is maintained while in foster care.

Objective 1 - Children's needs including basic placement needs are assessed upon entry into foster care.

Task 1 – Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - Revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case. Completion by: September 30, 2007

Status

Completed, the new DCFS risk and family assessments were implemented October 2006

Task 2 – Implement risk assessment and family assessment process according to the PIP work plan. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status: Completed, the new DCFS risk and family assessments were implemented October 2006

Task 3 – Completion Action Step 2.6. of the PIP - Increase the percentage of children in foster care who receive initial, comprehensive and ongoing mental health services that are documented in CHRIS and hard copy files. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

Completed, DCFS continues to work with UAMS and area mental health agencies to identify and correct problems that have not met the correct percentage for initial health screens, comprehensive exams, and mental health needs. DCFS has increased it health staff around the state and the quarterly training for health Service workers was re-established. Compliance with the 24 hour screenings, 72 hours screenings, and the comprehensive health screens improved dramatically in several DCFS areas.

Task 4– Utilize results of QSPR reports to monitor task 2. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2008

Status:

Completed, the new DCFS risk and family assessment were implemented in October 2006 and it is early to utilize the QSPR. A request to change the completion date may be needed in order to monitor task2.

Objective 2 - Children are placed in the least restrictive most family like setting – (close proximity to siblings)

Task 1 – Establish baseline of children placed in their home county. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

Task 2 – Establish baseline of children placed together with their siblings. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

Completed, the DCFS Planning Unit performed research on keeping siblings together and connected while in foster care. The paper included a literature review, DCFS policy citations, and available DCFS reports. DCFS understand the importance of keeping siblings together. The policy and practice of DCFS supports siblings being placed together. The data also shows that the majority of our siblings are placed with at least one of their siblings. DCFS will be forming a committee to explore the options mention in the research that could have a positive impact on DCFS strengthening sibling connections.

Task 3 – Address steps to get siblings placed together when they are not initially placed together. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status:

Completed, DCFS has formed a committee to explore the options mention in the research on keeping siblings together and connected while in foster care. The options could have a positive impact on DCFS strengthening sibling connections.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2008

Objective 3 - Children are placed with siblings, unless it is inappropriate to do so.

Task 1 – Completion of Action Step 3.1 of the PIP and monitor foster care recruitment plan. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Status:

Completed, all of the benchmarks for action step 3.1 of the PIP were completed. The foster parent recruitment committee will monitor the effectiveness of the foster parent recruitment plan.

Goal 3 - Ensure DCFS capacity to provide services focused on reunification or other permanency goals in a timely manner.

Objective 1 - Develop sufficient services to support families.

Task 1 – Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - Revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools

and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

Completed, all of the benchmarks for action step 1.2 of the PIP were completed. The new DCFS risk and family assessment were implemented in October 2006.

Task 2 – Completion of Action Step 2.2 in the PIP - Expand the current array of services and address service gaps, especially in rural areas, to meet the needs of children and families served by DCFS in order to protect children and prevent removal. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Status:

Completed, all of the benchmarks for action step 2.2 of the PIP were completed. DCFS continues to explore ways to expand services to meet the needs of children and families. Children are referred to the Child and Adolescence Services System program (CASSP) when they require intensive mental health services and inter-agency involvement on service plans. The P-card has allowed for more services to be purchased and a more immediate action can be taken to prevent removal (such as being able to pay for rent, bills, or food). State legislation was passed to add more Human Service Workers in the schools.

Objective 2 - Provide opportunities for foster families to be involved with biological families.

Task 1 – Ensure foster parent and biological parent are involved in planning for services and developing the case plan. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status:

Completed, DCFS explored the possibility of Family Team meeting (FTM) or Family Group Conferencing for several years and have explored several models. In the spring of 2006, DCFS conducts a FTM Pilot in Sebastian County. A procedure was developed for what was to happen before the FTM, during the meetings and after the meeting. Four teams on 12 cases conducted FTM. Initial projections were that more could be conducted. The results showed the cases selected were opened between February 1993 to October 2005 and most of the response indicated the criteria for selection of cases for the FTM should have been cases opened more recently in order to establish a better relationship with the worker and the family at the beginning and to hopefully see more expedient progress toward the goal. The appropriate participants were invited and for the most part, all attended. Reviewers felt that caseload size was a factor in the Family Service Worker ability to complete necessary information and casework with the families. Reviewers saw merit in the FTM facilitator not being the caseworker, which was a change in attitude for someone the FTM Pilot Team. This was due to the time required to set the FTM up and the objectivity and facilitation skills needed to manage the process.

Task 2 – Explore feasibility of visits taking place in the foster home. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status: DCFS is requesting an extension until 9/30/2008 to explore this issue with the DCFS Foster Parent Advisory Board.

Task 3 – Train staff to inform both the biological parent and foster parent of the importance of visits between child and parent. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status: Completed, a sub committee of the Foster Care Group reviewed the DCFS policy and practice regarding the training staff on the importance of visits between child and parents.

- (1) Staff is trained on the importance of this during the CORE training and are updated annually during Grief and Loss training
- (2) When a child enters foster care the worker informs the biological parents of the importance of child/parent visits. A visitation plan is put in place during the first staffing and may be updated at all subsequent staffing as needed
- (3) Upon placement of a child in a foster home the foster parent are information of the importance of child/parent visits and visits will take place according to policy
- (4) The importance of parent/child visits is reviewed during all inquiry meetings
- (5) The importance of parent/child visits are reviewed in depth at all orientation Trainings

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

In-Home Support (by Social Service Aides)

❖ Belief: Every Child Matters

➤ Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First.

- Outcome: Children served are safe. No true reports of maltreatment received after supportive services (SS) given.

Reduction in the percent of children who are abused or neglected within one year of receiving supportive services. Current performance is 5%. Target performance is 3% by June 30, 2006

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 11.52%

- Outcome: Children do not enter foster care.

% of children receiving SS services who entered foster care within one year of initiation of services performance is currently at 2%. The % of children entering foster care after receipt of these services will be reduced by is 1% by June 30, 2006.

Source of Information – DCFS Annual Report Card

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 2.43%

❖ Belief: We have a responsibility to provide services that work.

➤ Specific Belief: Family Centered services are most effective

- Outcome: The plan and services are developed by and include the family.

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be

70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005

77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006

84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007

91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008

95% 5th year or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information is the Quality Service Peer Review (QSPR) item 18

2nd source - Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 76.72%

In-Home Support Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - The Division will develop a clear, consistent job description for the Social Service Aides (SSA's) and provide training and certification for improved skills to work with families.

Objective 1: Explore development of a career ladder for SSA's.

Task 1: Develop proposal of a career ladder for SSA's. Completion by 07/01/07

Task 2: Identify job specifications for the each recommended level of SSA's. Completion by 09/01/07

Task 3: Submit changes to DCFS Executive staff and if necessary to DHS then OPM for changes. Completion by 12/30/07

Completion of tasks by March 2009

Status: The Arkansas Legislature directed Office of Personnel Management to conduct a pay plan study which includes a review of all classification and positions in State Government. This was completed in October of 2006 year and presented to Legislators during session that begins in January of 2007. There was not any decision was made to take any action with the recommendations although it is still on the table.

The tasks for this goal are not achievable as the Division does not have the authority for these changes, but the committee will review the goal and develop new tasks to establish clear job functions and recommend to executive staff that these functional job descriptions be implemented statewide. Extend goal achievement date to March 2009.

Objective 2: Establish a training and certification program for SSA's, which includes substance abuse training and include a plan for continuing education.

Task 1: Identify areas of training needed for SSA's based on the career ladder. Completion by 09/01/07

Task 2: Develop listing of competencies for SSAs. Completion by 09/01/07

Task 3: Develop a training and certification program based on competencies for SSAs. Completion by 09/01/07

Task 4: Implement and monitor tasks above. Completion by 06/30/09

Completion of tasks by June 30, 2009

Status

The agency has certified designated SSA's to teach Active Parenting Education to families in group settings or one-on-one in the family's home. Training has been provided to Aides on Anger Management and continues to provide on an ongoing basis as needed. Aides are encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities planned by Staff Development and Mid-South Training Academy. Substance Abuse training are now available.

Objective 3: Explore with university partners options for SSA's to receive support to work on a Bachelor's level Social Work degree.

Task 1: Develop program and policy for providing educational (BSW w/IV-E tuition currently UAF will provide) services for SSA's. Completion by 1/30/08

Task 2: Implement an educational program for SSA's. Completion by 1/30/08

Task 3: Monitor and report the numbers of staff completing the program. Completion by 1/30/08

Status

BSW/SSA policy has been written. There are some barriers with implementation and must be presented to Executive staff before moving forward. UAF has developed some courses for on line classes which are pending approval from the Department of Education. The Human Diversity class has also been taped for on line production.

This objective will be deleted as the achievement is not possible based on the length of time and financial barriers in completion of degree. The on line training and other training options are available.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Goal 2 - Produce better timely, individualized services to clients and customers.

Objective 1 – Develop a screen in CHRIS for SSA's to document casework activity for monitoring purposes.

Task 1: Ensure that there is a process in CHRIS for workers to document the referral of a case to an SSA staff person. Completion by 9/30/08

Task 2: Referrals must be approved by the supervisor and incorporated into the case plan. Completion by 12/08

Task 3: Review and update referral and CFS 322 Homemaker Referral form. Completion by 3/09

Completion of tasks by June 20, 2009

Status: To be initiated for planning by September 2008 and completed by June 2009

INDEPENDENT LIVING

GOAL 1

Independent Living services will enhance foster children being safe and self-sufficient.

Objective 1: Develop formal job descriptions and duties for Independent Living (IL) Coordinator positions

Task 1

Review current job descriptions of IL Coordinators and define roles and responsibilities of the IL Coordinator. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Social Service Aide position information was reviewed and compared to actual job requirements of IL Coordinators in September 2005. Other information and suggestions were gathered from ILP Coordinators during September and October 2005 to further define expected roles and functions of IL Coordinators. Completed 12-31-05

This information was submitted to the new DCFS Director 1-17-07

Task 2

Identify job specifications needed for the IL Coordinators – Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Job specifications for IL Coordinators in all 10 DCFS service areas were condensed into a single recommended position description. Completed 12-31-05

This information was submitted to the new DCFS Director 1-17-07

Task 3

Based on the identification, make recommendations regarding the appropriate job specifications and submit for approval from Executive Staff. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Job specifications for Independent Living Coordinator I and II were written and submitted to Executive Staff. Recommendations regarding IL position Levels I (Grade 15) and II (Grade 17), Supervisory Levels, as well as, workloads/caseloads were originally submitted for consideration in November 2005.

Completed 12-31-05

This information was submitted to the new DCFS Director 1-17-07

Task 4

Identify IL competencies and specific training needs of this position. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Training needs of IL Coordinators have been discussed and identified. Training is needed in the use of the CHRIS system in both input and output, in resource development for growth in the availability of life-skills training resources and in effective ways to communicate and coordinate with juvenile courts to achieve case-plan goals. Completed 12-31-05.

However, additional competencies are being sought by Midsouth Training Academy to ensure that training provided to IL Coordinators meet the skill acquisition needs they will need to provide necessary services to eligible youth. Inquiries are being made to other states to determine how they identify, use and train staff to provide Chafee and other Independent Living Services. The National Resource Center in Tulsa is also being asked to identify relevant competency and training information they may be aware of. So far, there are no states with a curriculum specifically designed for IL Coordinators. Since January, 2007, IL Coordinators have been provided training on organizational skills, resource development, case planning and mentoring and case documentation.

Task 5

Explore supervisory needs of this position and develop recommendations.
Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: A recommendation that supervisory levels for the IL Coordinator position be the same staff positions area to area to promote better supervisory communications between areas and to reduce or eliminate information lags and caseload assignments when clients move from area to area. Supervisory staff at the same levels will know and work with each other, have the same organizational responsibilities and any protocol problems will be reduced or eliminated. This recommendation was forwarded with the recommendations package in December 2005. Completed 12-31-05

Objective 2

All eligible foster youth will receive independent living services

Task 1

Ensure that all eligible IL youth are assessed. Completion by 9-30-07

STATUS: CHRIS reports indicate that 52% of eligible teens have been assessed for needed life-skills training and have had this added to their case plans. This is down from the previously report 72.7%.

Task 2

Either a CHRIS tickler be developed or a monthly report generated that alerts IL, FSW and supervisors when children turn 14 while in care or enter care and are 14 or older. Completion 9-30-07 **STATUS: The 14th birthday is flagged to alert staff that a referral and an IL assessment need to be completed for youth becoming eligible. In addition, the system generates a report that flags and lists youth who have been in the system for 30 days or more without any selection of life skills training being made. Life skills training needs can only be identified by assessment, and an assessment can only occur after a referral is made. The report exists now.**

Objective 3

Independent Living Program services curriculum (life-skills training) will be developed based on levels (age, acquisition of skills/training) and ability of the individual youth

Task 1

Review all cases identified as needing life-skills training. Completion by 9-30-07

STATUS: A higher proportion of youth are being referred for IL services after becoming eligible. Reports indicate that 82% of eligible teens are now being referred for IL services. The need for life-skills training is being correlated with case planning to help ensure that life-skills are addressed in the case plan/transitional plan.

Task 2

Develop a statewide curriculum detailing the 15 categories of training for youth in the Independent Living Program. Completion by 9-30-07

STATUS: Still in progress. Limited by availability of Area life-skills training resources and Coordinators lack of training to find, recruit, utilize and maintain curriculum resources. Also limited by inconsistent Area-to-Area definition and usage of IL Coordinator positions. As resources grow, curriculum standardization will also improve.

Objective 4

All necessary parties who will be included in case planning and service delivery for the youth will be provided a copy of the IL plan

Task 1

FSW will notify affected parties in advance of regularly planned staffing and the 17-17 ½ staffing and will include the youth, IL Coordinator, other secondary workers and foster parent(s). Others may include attorney-ad-litem, OCC personnel, supervisor and birth parents. Completion by 9-30-06 **Task is completed.**

STATUS: Notices are being sent to all affected parties prior to staffing.

Task 2

Attendees and interested parties will be provided with copies of assessment results and case and life-skills plans, updates and changes. Completion by 9-30-06. **Task is completed**

STATUS: All parties are being provided with copies of new, updated and changed client goals and plans.

Objective 5

Independent Living Program Services will be coordinated with other services e.g. Foster Care, Therapeutic Foster Care, Job Corps, WIA, and Education

Task 1

Individual Services will be developed for each youth i.e., mentoring, on-the-job training, internship, volunteering. Completion by 6-30-09

STATUS: Youth are being included in planning their own case services and having input into services they can both receive and provide. In addition, collaboration is underway with Workforce Investment (DOL), Employment Security, Higher Education (DOE), 2-Year Colleges, Job Corps, DHHS/DYS/DCFS, County Extension Services, Department of Justice, Social Security Administration, Department of Commerce, Youth Services, Rehabilitation Services, Centers for Youth and others to identify and fill service gaps for eligible IL youth and former foster youth. This collaboration is working both at the federal and state level to encompass all agencies that provide services to these clients and to identify, gaps, overlaps, resources and personnel to establish a statewide infrastructure to improve service delivery. A national "Solutions Desk" is now in place in Tulsa so that the 16 states doing the collaborative work and applications will have a "clearinghouse" to present ideas and search for solutions to barriers such as funding and reporting dissimilarities and limitations at the federal level which impact service systems and delivery at the state levels. An Arkansas "Solutions Desk" is also being developed for the collaborative agencies to use to share information, needs, activities and solutions with each other. Arkansas now has a youth-friendly website available on-line at www.avdc.arkansas.gov which can now begin to serve as a resource for our youth to access and find out about services that are available through the various agencies and how to be involved in planning for and receiving services for themselves. DCFS/ILP has provided several links and information to the website so that youth in search of educational assistance, life-skills training needs and other transitional services and assistance can more easily find help. The site will be updated on a regular basis to facilitate the amount of information available.

Youth Advisory Board members are being exposed to trainings and information concerning mentoring, internships, volunteering, the legislative process and other activities that they can take back to their representative areas and share with youth. They and the ILP Coordinators are being encouraged to also arrange for local resources to present to

them and become involved in these processes and part of life-skills trainings. Local Youth Advisory Board meetings are being held, documented and reported to ensure that information is being shared in both hierarchical directions and that their issues and suggestions are making it to the state level.

The Arkansas Youth Development Collaboration continues to meet, plan, recruit, coordinate, define, design and track activities and information concerning the collaborative efforts and has included both the private and political sectors in the base-building efforts of the infrastructure hierarchy. The ‘Vision Team’ (12 members) is meeting regularly to define and re-define the short and long-term goals of the larger collaboration and to provide oversight and assistance to the rest of the team concerning assignments, strategies, project management, interfaces, tracking and infrastructure implementation progress. An application for funding has been submitted to the Department of Labor to provide some assistance with the hierarchical and organizational rollout of the collaborative structure at the local level.

Efforts are also being made to determine the feasibility of combining the organizational information sharing that was becoming prevalent with the Arkansas Transition To Adulthood Conference in a different format that will include more of the collaborative entities.

Task 2

Educational plans and services will be based on the youth’s interests and abilities. Completion by 6-30-09

STATUS: Youth are included in secondary and post-secondary educational planning. IL Youth Advisory Board members advocate for area youth to request to be involved in case planning and to remain in care so that they may receive services.

Protective Services

❖ Belief: Every Child Matters

➤ Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First.

- Outcome: Child is safe, no repeat true reports – during and 6 months after services provided and case closed Goal date: 95% by June 30, 2009.

Source of Information:

National Standard - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who were victims of a report of child maltreatment determined true during the first six months of the period under review, 6.1% or fewer children had another report determined within six months.

QSPR and CHRIS – item 2 – Repeat Child Maltreatment – 95% by June 30, 2009 to substantially achieve this target.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (6/01/07-5/31/08) is 9.92% with 90.08% with no repeat maltreatment.

Outcome: Six month after case closed, no removal required; safety and risk assessment indicates child is safe. Goal Date: June 30, 2009

Source of Information – DCFS Annual Report Card

CHRIS

Status: Statewide average for period under review (6/01/07-5/31/08) is 1.48%

➤ Specific Belief: Children deserve to thrive, not just survive.

- Outcome: Physical, medical and emotional health needs are met (immunizations up to date, medication management is maintained, checkups, weight/eye and dental, grooming etc)---Physical Health of Child target will be substantially achieved by:
 - 1st year 90%, or by June 30, 2005
 - 2nd year 92%, or by June 30, 2006
 - 3rd year 93%, or by June 30, 2007
 - 4th year 94% or by June 30, 2008
 - 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR – Item 22

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 92.86%

Mental Health of Child target will be substantially achieved by:

- 1st year 80%, or by June 30, 2005

2nd year 83%, or by June 30, 2006
3rd year 85% or by June 30, 2007
4th year 90% or by June 30, 2008
5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR – Item 23

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-5/31/08) is 92.86%

❖ Belief: People Need Family

- Outcome: The plan and services are developed by and include the family

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be
70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005
77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006
84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007
91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008
95% 5th year. Or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information is the Quality Service Peer Review (QSPR) item 18

2nd source - Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 76.72%.

Protective Services

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - Maintain family unit safely

Objective 1: On-going assessment of risk is completed throughout the life of the case

Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case.

Task 2: Evaluation of the new risk assessment process will be conducted 1 year after implementation

Status: All staff have now been trained in the new case plan process which was implemented in October 2006. An evaluation of case plan policy conducted by Hornby Zeller Associates, Inc. includes information and analysis of tool for assessing the family's strength, needs, and risk in development of the case plan. Part of the

methodology used was asking the question of whether the case plans were completed in more timely matter since the new FSNRA and case plan forms were implements and how did DCFS staff feel about the new FNSRA and case plan forms.

The results of this evaluation indicated that staff generally viewed the changes to the case plan and FSNRA as improvement. There were still some issues noted in timely completion of case plans. It did indicate that more stakeholders were invited to participate in the process.

Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the evaluation.

A DCFS Case Plan Workgroup is working on implementing recommendations based on the evaluation. The workgroup is comprised of Family Service Workers, CHRIS, Field and Administrative staff.

Status: The new risk assessment instrument has been implemented effective 10-1-06. Staff have been trained and are using the instrument on all new cases. The evaluation will be conducted beginning October 1, 2007, to give a full year to review. Task #3 is deferred until after the evaluation is completed.

Objective 2: Family needs and strengths assessed and identified.

Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case.

Task 2: Utilizing the results of the QSPR, evaluate the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment and family involvement in the process.

Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the evaluation.

Objective 3: Parents and children are involved in the development of the case plan

Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.3 of the PIP - Revise the case planning process, policies, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools to assure appropriate providers and family members are involved, including non-custodial parents where appropriate, and that case plans are developed to keep children safe and prevent removal.

Task 2: Utilizing the results of the QSPR, evaluate the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment.

Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the findings from the evaluation.

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 1, Action Step 1.2 In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools,

systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case. Action Step 1.3 Revise the case planning process, policies, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools to assure appropriate providers and family members are involved, including non-custodial parents where appropriate, and that case plans are developed to keep children safe and prevent removal

STATUS: The agency has implemented the supervisory review tool, with one third of the caseload being reviewed every month. This review is tracked automatically in our CHRIS system. Our Quality Assurance Unit will evaluate the use and usefulness of the tool and recommendations will be implemented. This continues to be an ongoing process.

The Division continues in their partnership with the Division of Behavioral Health in ensuring the mental health needs of children are met. We have established a strategic plan with DCFS and DBHS to ensure our partnership has specific goals and actions to meet this goal.

The Division continues to be very involved with a System of Care effort to transform the behavioral system in Arkansas to one that is family driven; youth guided, and child centered. Each committee developing recommendations for this system has a DCFS representative.

Goal 2 - Determine effectiveness of services

Objective 1:

Case plan is framed to meet the needs of the specific child and family members (including the physical, medical and emotional needs)

Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.3 of the PIP - Revise the case planning process, policies, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools to assure appropriate providers and family members are involved, including non-custodial parents where appropriate, and that case plans are developed to keep children safe and prevent removal.

Task 2: Utilizing the results of the QSPR, evaluate the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment.

Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the findings from the evaluation.

STATUS: All staff have now been trained in the new case plan process which was implemented in October 2006. An evaluation of case plan policy conducted by Hornby Zeller Associates, Inc. includes information and analysis of tool for assessing the family's strength, needs, and risk in development of the case plan. Part of the methodology used was asking the question of whether the case plans were completed in more timely matter since the new FSNRA and case plan forms were implements and how did DCFS staff feel about the new FNSRA and case plan forms.

The results of this evaluation indicated that staff generally viewed the changes to the case plan and FSNRA as improvement. There were still some issues noted in timely completion of case plans. It did indicate that more stakeholders were invited to participate in the process.

The Protective Services committee met on April 19, 2008. Due to turnover, there are new members and co-chairs. The committee reconfirmed our commitment to the plan and to greater involvement of stakeholders. We will meet again in six months.

Staffing

Goal 1

Have sufficient qualified staff to insure child safety and families are served.

Objective 1

Determine the number of staff that would be sufficient for the Division's county operations by June 30, 2007.

Task 1

COA/CWLA standards for staff ratio will be adopted by September 30, 2005.

Status: DHHS and DCFS finalized recommendations; currently a monthly report is produced that provides an analysis of caseloads of workers by county, area and statewide numbers.

Task 2

All cases including primary Assignments and Secondary Assignments in all service areas will be designated a weight for purposes of determining caseload sizes by December 30, 2006.

Note: This needs to be revised to include caseloads of Resource Workers inquiries and provider files. A preliminary meeting was held in November 2006 to discuss a workload for Resource Workers. Discussed in this meeting were identified key functions and activities and what might be pulled from CHRIS. Once this has been completed, the results will be reflected in a draft report from CHRIS and the team will meet again to discuss weights.

Current monthly report provides by area, county and worker the number of investigations, protective services, foster care children, supportive services and includes primary and secondary assignments.

Status: Roundtable conducted and included Resource Workers and Area Managers; this group developed draft job description and suggested weights for these particular staff position. Community Services has submitted and recommendations were approved regarding the Resource Workers.

Task 3

Determine current caseloads and projections of staff needed by county, area, and statewide totals by June 30, 2006.

Status: Current monthly report provides by area, county and worker the number of investigations, protective services, foster care children, supportive services and includes primary and secondary assignments.

Roundtable conducted and included Resource Workers and Area Managers and this group developed draft job description and suggested weights for these particular staff. Recommendations for caseload and weights of Resource Workers cases have been

developed. Committee met in December and put together an outline of training needs which has been submitted to the Director for DCFS.

A report has been produced that provides an analysis of current case and projections needed by area and for the state for consideration in the next develop of the Division's budget. Task was completed.

Task 4

Evaluate outcomes of the previous three tasks and use that information to assist in developing budget preparations and reports for management of staff by **December 30, 2008**

Status: Need to identify methodology for evaluating the tasks.

Task 5

Request funding and positions for sufficient number of staff to adequately provide services to children and families served by November 30, 2006.

Note: A request for Transition Worker positions Family Service Worker Specialist (20) were submitted and were approved by the Deputy Director of DHHS.

A DHHS committee has been established to review and identify staffing needs, staffing status, caseloads, recruitment activities and hiring issues. This committee meets bimonthly in the Directors office. A report has been produced that provides an analysis of current case and projections needed by area and for the state for consideration in the next development of the Division's budget.

The 2007 Arkansas Legislative Session provided a glimmer of hope by approving the Division's budget request. One of the items requested to reinstate 75 positions and an additional request was made for 32 new Family Service Worker positions to complete child maltreatment investigations. The Division is currently in the process of hiring staff to complete child maltreatment investigations.

Objective 2

Recruit Staff by June 30, 2007 and annually thereafter.

Task 1

Review and modify the recruitment activities (Professional Development, Personnel, DCFS, and DHHS) by January, 2006.

Status: Meet and seek input on recruitment activities from the DHHS Personnel Unit. Several meetings and conference calls have been conducted to discuss recruitment events and coordinate activities. A calendar of college and career fairs has been established and includes the name, date of event and who from DCFS will be assisting in the event (see attachment for a listing of some of these). Feedback is provided from DCFS field staff who attend these discussing the efforts of the event and outcomes. Staff from DHHS personnel unit along with DCFS Community Services staff attend job, career and college fairs held around the state to assist in this event. This is an ongoing activity.

Task 2

Identify areas where recruitment is an issue and develop specific recruitment needs, i.e. Spanish speaking workers, by June 30, 2006.

Status: Special television ads were developed for Northwest Arkansas, a special entry rate was created for this area to entice interested applicants. The Division created diverse job opportunities that will provide options to assist in staffing a county office i.e. internship, co op positions and job share positions. Functional job duties for these positions were developed. Ten (10) Internship positions have been identified, ten (10) co op positions have been identified and two (2) job share positions for Area 1 have been identified. Area Managers are currently interviewing possible candidates for the items and Co op positions.

Community Services staff attend various universities, colleges, education institutions and job fairs. Periodic reports are generated and provided to the DHSS Committee which details the results of the recent recruitment efforts. Staff are currently attending job fairs, career fairs, and information sessions with schools to interview spring graduates at John Brown university. University of Arkansas at Fort Smith, University of Central Arkansas, Arkansas State University and Arkansas Tech. See attached spreadsheet with all of these represented. The task was completed and this is an ongoing activity. **Task is ongoing.**

Task 3

Schedule and attend university and college career days and job fairs to advertise, recruit and provide information about various job openings.

Status: DHHS Humans resources provides the calendar, Community Services Assistant Director schedules field staff to attend these. Conference calls and a meeting were conducted to outline roles and responsibilities, identify staff attending the information sessions and identify staff who will be conducting the interviews with the students planning to graduate. Procedures were outlined and shared with field staff and Executive staff. **The task was completed and this is an ongoing activity.**

Task 4

Schedule and attend university and college classes, social work classes of those graduating to talk about the agency's mission, the various job openings and tasks, stipend student information, etc.

Status: **The task was completed in 2007and is an ongoing activity.**

Task 5 previously 3

Implement the plan (Personnel and Professional Development) by December 30, 2006.

Task 6 – previously 4

Implement the plan (Personnel and Professional Development) by December 30, 2006.

Status: **The task was completed in 2007and is an ongoing activity.**

Objective 3

Address family service worker on-call issues by June 30, 2007.

Task 1

Identify on-call options (Pulaski County On-Call work group) by December 1, 2005.

Status: Roundtable conference call was conducted November, 2005 with participation by Williams Toles, Rosemary White, Kim Alexander, Debbie Shiell, Megon Bush. Recommendations were submitted to the DCFS Director and some of the suggestions and enhancements to practice are being implemented at Pulaski. After hours or a second shift was identified by Executive Summary of Assessment of Best Case Practice published in November 2006. As a result, research was conducted by surveying states with "shift work" staff, forming a committee of field staff for input and reviewing personnel policies for developing this type of position. The proposal was submitted to Executive Staff December 2006.

Email from Pat Page, DCFS Director dated 3/14/2008 stated "On Call and Shift Staff - We had recommendations on this some time ago -- that were put on hold until we resolved the Single Investigation Unit idea. Now that is resolved, Dick Powell, Assistant Director for Community Services, will dust off those old recommendations and act on them."

Task 2

Compile information and make recommendation by June, 2006.

Status: Ongoing. Development policies and procedures to test out these in a large area, medium area and rural area.

Task 3

Implement recommendations by **December 2008.**

Status: Need to determine if tasks need to be included in agency policy.

Task 4

Evaluate the implementation of recommendations and modify based on the results of the evaluation by June 30, 2007.

Objective 5:

Develop and implement BSW (SSA), MSW program for providing services to children and families by June 30, 2008.

Task 1

Identify options and incentives to allow staff to complete course work for BSW and/or MSW (Professional Development) by April, 2006. **This task is completed.**

- BSW/SSA Policy has been written.
- UAF has developed HBSE I & II as on-line classes. They are now with DOE for their approval. The Human Diversity class has also been taped for on-line production.

- DCFS has had an MSW Educational leave Program implemented for over ten years.

Task 2

Collaborate with the universities to develop policies and procedures for the above (Professional Development) by December, 2006.

- BSW/SSA Policy has been written.
- UAF has developed HBSE I & II as on-line classes. They are now with DOE for their approval. The Human Diversity class has also been taped for on-line production.

Status: Task complete

Task 3

Implement the above and evaluate the tasks (Professional Development) by June 30, 2008.

Objective 6

Review and revise Supervisor Training Curriculum by June 30, 2009.

Task1

Review the current supervisor's curriculum and identify needed topics that will cover evidence based on practice and clinical aspects of the job by June 30, 2006.

Status: Review current supervisor competencies, formal and functional job descriptions of unit and county supervisor positions. Several competencies were reworded, added competencies on CQI, MIS (report utilization) and Ethics. Task completed

Task 2

Review activities and learning materials from the Mentoring Supervisors project that should be a part of the supervisor training and staff development by June 30, 2006. **Task completed**

Task 3

Review the revised supervisor job description to be developed through the Classification and Competency Study identify competencies related to job functions by **December 2008**.

Status: Several additional competencies were added, revised others and ranked according to mission critical, timeliness, and immediacy for a supervisors need to know that competency. The next step will be to seek final approval from DCFS Executive staff regarding the new competencies, what will be covered in the 1st year, update training in the 2nd and 3rd year and any training after that.

Task 4

Develop a multi-tiered supervisor training plan and present to DCFS Executive Staff for approval by June 30, 2007.

Status: Completed in task one. Need to submit recommendations to Executive staff for review and approval. MidSouth will develop the curriculum for the new competencies.

Task 5

Implement approved training plan by October 1, 2007.

Task 6

Evaluate the training plan and modify the plan based on the results of the evaluation by June 30, 2009.

Objective 7: Development of a comprehensive and inclusive retention plan by January 30, 2008

Task 1:

Identification of key retention activities by December, 2006

Status: The Worker Recruitment and Retention Task Force will meet in July to review the status of their November, 2002 and determine what has been completed and what needs to be carried into the CFSP.

Task 2:

Development of an ongoing personnel satisfaction survey that is separate from the existing exit interview in current policy. **December 2008**

Status: A survey was developed in 2004. It has been resubmitted for review, consideration and approval to the new Planning Unit Manager. The Planning Unit will implement a personnel survey by the end of the calendar year **2008**.

Task 3:

Focus group sessions conducted periodically in the different DCFS areas to identify strengths and ideas for improvement. **Task is ongoing. Strategy used this last year as part of Statewide Assessment in preparing for the CFSR.**

Status: Completed in Area VI – “short term Area VI – Pulaski Plan” was developed and recommendations completed as a result of this plan.

Completed in Area VII and report submitted January, 2006. Recommendations will be developed by March, 2006.

The Department of Health and Human Services conducted focus groups with all Divisions and Offices. A random selection of 473 names was pulled and 293 staff participated in 12 focus groups. Questions posed included; a) identify positive characteristics that should be evident in our culture if we want to be a high performance and high quality state agency; b)when you think about all levels of leaders/managers/supervisors in a high performance agency, what should our leaders start doing, stop doing, continue doing to build a high performance agency; c)identify a list of common problems or barriers that you have experienced at work that if changed, would make your job easier and; d)if you were the director of your division or DHHS and you could

change one thing, what would you change. A survey has been developed which every employee has been asked to complete.

Task 4:

Development of a Family Service Worker advisory group.

Status: A Worker Advisory Group facilitated by Midsouth Academy has been established in Area VI. This group meets monthly Thursday morning at 8:30

Area VI has developed an Employee Advisory Council made up of staff from Area VI to include aides, family services workers, supervisors-anyone interested in attending and participating in their group. The Area place “possibility boxes” in each of the five(5) area boxes allowing staff to provide suggestions, comments, or concerns about the Area’s operation. The Council meets monthly to review these and make recommendations, discuss in their CQI meetings or talk about in weekly supervisor meetings.

Also note that following has been completed:

The DHHS High Performance Culture Leadership Summit is being conducted and attended by all Area Managers, many County Supervisor, and Unit supervisor are completing Division wide projects. One of these was the development of an Employee Advisory Council in Pulaski-this has been formed and is currently in the process of developing mission and vision of the group. In addition, employee suggestion boxes were place in all of the Pulaski locations.

A second group developed a plan entitled the Employee Recognition and Empowerment Program designed to assist in retaining staff by providing recognition for a job well done, as well as motivating staff to improve their performance and service to clients. This plan has been submitted to the DCFS Executive staff for review, approval, and then to proceed with implementation.

A third group proposal was submitted entitled “ DCFS In the Know” designed to develop a “celebrations” event, problem solve teams, orientation and job shadowing, updating the DCFS web site, central office staff visits and meet the field in their Areas. The work of this committee is ongoing and the Celebration was conducted September 2007. **This conference was conducted and was a success.**

Task 5: Development of incentives separate from financial incentives. January 30, 2008

Status: Review the Worker Recruitment and Retention Task Force Recommendations submitted November, 2002 and determine what was completed and what needs to be carried into the CFSP. Establish a committee to identify incentives. The committee is scheduled to meet March 28, 2007 to review the previous recommendations.

The Worker Recruitment and Retention Committee was revitalized and are working on emphasizing Retention of staff.

This committee has met March 10, April 24, and May 5th. Areas include the following: (1) What would it take for the workers to get access to CHRIS at home on their personal computers? Looking at the criteria for workers to have that, and to consider this as a perk; once the worker passes panel is identified they need it.

(2) Collect all old reports on committees review them and approach the executive staff to discuss what the results were of those recommendations.

(3) Survey people who stays, set up categories those who stays 3 years, 5 years, 10 years, a brief telephone survey, just to find out what is positive in the division and what has caused them to stay for this length period of time. We want these surveys to be much focused and random and not all employees' needs to be surveyed.

(4) Discuss the possibilities how other Divisions and Departments in the state do over hiring.

Other areas of consideration include:

a. How to use some employees could use their skills after they finish the MSW program.

b. Possible centralized hiring process to alleviate the administrative work done in the field.

c. Identify ways to celebrate small incentives first of the month, first of the year, and recognizing Masters Degrees.

d. Better utilization of technology that we have available to us when it comes to lap tops, remote desk top access

e. Is the Division as a whole is looking at developing future managers and supervisors. We recognize a lot our work force that has been around that there is a large gap in our work force, we have a lot of new employees, and we have a lot of employees that are getting close to retirement.

f. Talking about incentives, when the workers pass panel there should be some perks, rather it's a cell phone, and the state has ways of reimbursement for personal cell phone usage. There should be some different things that come with the jobs other than just case work.

Supportive Services

❖ Belief: Every Child Matters

➤ Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First.

- Outcome: Children served are safe. No true reports of maltreatment received after supportive services (SS) given.

Reduction in the percent of children who are abused or neglected within one year of receiving supportive services. Current performance is **5%**. Target performance is 3% by June 30, 2009

Source of Information – The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Annual Report Card

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 10.06%

- Outcome: Children do not enter foster care.

% of children receiving SS services who entered foster care within one year of initiation of services performance is currently at **1%**. The % of children entering foster care after receipt of these services will be reduced by is 1% by June 30, 2009.

Source of Information – DCFS Annual Report Card

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 2.40%

❖ Belief: We have a responsibility to provide services that work.

➤ Specific Belief: Family Centered services are most effective

- Outcome: The plan and services are developed by and include the family.

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be

70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005

77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006

84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007

91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008

95% 5th year or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information is the Quality Service Peer Review (QSPR) item 18

2nd source - Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/08) is 76.72%

Supportive Services Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - Clearly identify supportive services

Objective 1: Develop services to Families in Need of Services (FINS) as a separate service, differentiated from Supportive Services. Clearly define which families and services are appropriate for supportive services.

Task 1: Define supportive services.

Status:

Definition

Supportive Services Supportive Services are offered to and accepted by families on a voluntary basis to assist appropriate families with children experiencing problems associated with child development, child rearing, and family functioning. This service may also be court ordered. The services are offered as a prevention of harm to children and may be requested by the family or someone who is familiar with the family. The family must agree to accept the services if the service is requested by someone other than the family. The services are community-based and designed to:

- (1) increase the strength and stability of families;
- (2) increase the parent's confidence and competence in their parenting abilities; and
- (3) afford children a stable, supportive family environment and enhance child development.

Typical services include referrals to family resource centers, services offered through human services workers in schools, counseling, parenting classes, and assistance in accessing other support programs such as Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA).

Supportive Services are not offered based on a founded report of child maltreatment. Supportive Services cases are not opened for the sole purpose of providing daycare, on families only needing referrals, or on families only seeking information about services. A Supportive Services cases will be opened if the worker feels it is necessary in order to ensure the health, safety, and promote the best interest of the child. Supportive Services cases are time limited for a period of three (3) months and should be staffed after the three (3) month period to assess the need for the case to remain open or be closed.

Note: There is no need to open a Supportive Services case on families seeking only information and/or referral.

Task 2: Supportive Services Definition was submitted to the policy unit for review and approval

Status: The policy was sent to the Policy Unit for input.

Task 3: Policy circulated for approval, finalized and promulgated due by **December 2008**

Status : The Supportive Services Definition and other changes have been submitted to policy for the process of review, approval, and promulgations

Task 4: Changes to policy, procedure and practice will need to be promulgated. Completion by 12/31/08

Status: Recommendations were submitted by the Policy Unit.

Objective 2

Train staff, providers, and key stakeholders on Supportive Services

Task 1: Develop training plan and train staff, providers and key stakeholders on Supportive services.

Status: Not able to complete due to the definition not being approve until May 2008.

Task 2: Supportive Services Committee will forward the definition to the Professional Development Unit (PDU) for review and for them to put together a training plan by July 31, 2008.

Status: Once Policy Unit has reviewed and initiate promulgation, will refer to PDU.

Objective 3:

Educate the community and courts on Supportive Services

Task 1: Review current brochure on DCFS services.

Status: The current DCFS brochure was reviewed on 4/19/07. The Committee stated the brochure needed to be modified by adding information regarding supportive services.

Task 2-Revise the brochure to include Supportive Services to be completed by 8/30/08

Task 3: make brochure available to courts and the public by 12/31/08

Status: once the brochure is completed, the committee will submit the brochure to executive staff or it's designee to make brochure available to the courts and to the public.

Completion by **December 31, 2008**

Objective 4

Increase documentation of short term supportive services through CHRIS enhancements

Task 1: Identify and recommend changes needed in CHRIS to reflect Supportive Services based on definitional changes Completion by 8/30/08

Status: The committee will identify data needed from CHRIS based upon definitional changes to Supportive Services.

Task 2: CHRIS enhancements made and reports developed. Completion by 9/30/08

Status: The committee will contact CHRIS staff with identified changes for Supportive Services.

Task 3: Monitor the completion of the tasks. 9/30/08

Status: The committee will monitor the completion of tasks.

Goal 2 – Assess the outcome of services of Supportive Services

Objective 1 – Families who have maltreatment episodes or whose children enter foster care after receiving supportive services will have those cases reviewed to determine why services did not prevent maltreatment and out-of-home placement. Utilize Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process to address findings.

Status: Supportive Services Committee will utilize Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process to address findings.

Task 1: The committee will utilize the CQI process to review cases by 9/30/08

Task 2: to The Supportive Services Committee will recommend changes to address issues. Completion by 6/30/09

Objective 2: Conduct a special study on families who received Supportive Services and the impact of those services 1/31/09

Task 1: The committee will report the impact of Supportive Services on families 1/31/09

Objective 3: Utilize CQI process to address finding from the special study by March 30, 2009.

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 1, Action Step 1.2 In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case.

Goal 3 – Assure that client needs are matched to services

Objective 1: Assure resource directory (on line and printable) meets needs of staff.

Task 1: Review current E-Sources capability, including a review of validity of information by 6/30/09.

Task 2: Recommend changes needed in E-sources if any to meet DCFS field staff needs

Objective 1 – Provide resource directory for staff (online and ability to print)

Task 1: Devise services log to record in-house and provider of services. Completion by 6/30/09

Task 2: DCFS work on validating and updating e-Sources website. Completion by 6/30/09

Task 3: Determine if e-Sources website meets needs of the field staff, make recommendations for changes. Completion by 6/30/09

Status: Supportive Services Committee reviewed e-Sources on 4/19/07 and discovered that the information needed to be updated and relevant to the area. e-Sources is currently available to staff in the field. Supportive Services Committee will schedule a meeting with the e-Sources directory staff.

Objective 2 - Utilizing changes to assessment and case planning made through the Program Improvement Plan, document that client's needs are matched to the services.

Task 1: PIP implementation of action step 1.2.2 and 1.3.1 is documenting client's needs are met. Completion by 6/30/09

Task 2: QSPR and supervisory review tool results will be reviewed to determine that the needs of families are met. Completion by 6/30/09

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 2: Action Step 2.1 Review and prioritize service needs and contracts to existing budget allocations. Action Step 2.2 Expand current array of services and address service gaps, especially in rural areas, to meet the needs of children and families served by DCFS in order to protect children and prevent removal

For the Foster Care and Adoption Strategic Plan an additional strategy will be:

Recognizing that there are too many children in foster care and that their safety and well-being may be improved by other means, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) has selected six states—**Arkansas**, Florida, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania and South Carolina—to participate in a policy academy to *safely reduce the number of children in foster care*. The academy is being conducted in partnership with Casey Family Programs, a Seattle-based foundation committed to safely reducing nationwide the number of children in foster care by 50 percent by 2020.

During the last two decades, the number of children in foster care has nearly doubled. However, there is growing recognition that with appropriate services and supports to the families, many of these children could safely remain at home and avoid the trauma of separation from their home and community. For children who must enter foster care, they are more likely to have positive outcomes when placed in family-like settings and quickly reunited with their family, placed with kin or adopted.

This policy academy offers state teams, made up of representatives from governors' offices, state child welfare agencies, other relevant state agencies and stakeholders, the opportunity to work with national and state experts to improve outcomes for children and youth who come to the attention of the child welfare system.

"Most children in foster care have been removed from their homes because of neglect or abuse to ensure their own safety and well-being," said John Thomasian, director of the NGA Center.

"This policy academy will help states devise strategies for reducing the number of children in foster care while improving long-term outcomes for vulnerable children."

During the course of the academy, states will develop a two-year strategic plan to reduce the number of children in foster care while ensuring that safety remains paramount. The plans will focus on reducing the number of children entering care, shortening length of stay for those in care and/or improving permanency outcomes to reduce returns to care, as well as strategies for sustaining effort over time.

By the end of 2008, participating states are expected to:

- Improve their understanding of the state's child welfare data trends and what drives those trends;
- Improve collaboration among mental health, substance abuse, child welfare and other systems;
- Develop a plan that identifies outcomes the state wants to achieve and strategies for achieving them, specific action steps with timelines for moving forward and a plan for tracking progress and measuring success; and
- Identify new, increased or redirected funding to support and sustain the state's work.

Service Descriptions: Status for 2008

The Division delivers services directly and purchases services from private and public agencies, universities and individuals, using state and federal funds. Programs and services of other Divisions within the Department of Human Services (DHS) are also available to clients of DCFS. Delivery of services is coordinated with other Divisions administering TEA/TANF Medicaid, Food Stamps, Social Services Block Grant and other federal entitlement programs.

DCFS continues to work with the state Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program (CBCAP) State Lead Agency funded under Title II of CAPTA to develop child abuse prevention programs, in addition to the ones DCFS purchases.

DCFS staff provides child maltreatment investigations, assessment, case planning, referral and case management services. If a child cannot be maintained safely in their own home, DCFS will petition the court for custody and place the child in an approved foster home or licensed residential facility. The Division approves and supervises foster homes.

Direct services include the following:

Child Welfare Services is a broad category of services to children and their families and includes a variety of services described below, including Supportive Services, Child Protective Services, In-Home Support, Foster Care/Kinship Care Services, Independent Living services, and Adoption Promotion and Support.

Supportive Services - Voluntary services to families in need.

Child Protective Services - Child maltreatment investigations and protective interventions for children whose parents or legal guardians do not provide the care and protection needed for normal physical and emotional development and assistance to the parents or legal guardians to help them fulfill their parental roles.

In-Home Support – Social Service Aides provide support services to persons or families in their homes. Services are designed to provide children or adults with personal care needed to enable them to remain home and to prevent institutionalization or another form of out-of-home care. Social Service Aides also provide parent education.

Independent Living Services (direct service) - Each child in DHS custody, age fourteen or older, for whom the goal is not reunification shall be provided with instruction for development of basic life skills. Each child, age sixteen or older, shall be assessed every six (6) months to determine the progress in acquiring basic life skills. Services identified in the assessment to help the child achieve independence will be provided either directly or through contract. Each foster parent caring for, or interested in caring for, a child age fourteen or older, and each Family Service Worker responsible for any children, age fourteen or older, shall receive training in helping children acquire basic life skills.

The Independent Living grant program provides service to youth in foster care that are normally unavailable through other program funds such as Title IV-E-Foster Care. Services provided are primarily educational and are intended to keep youth in school while they obtain life skills that

will assist them in transitioning to adulthood. The program coordinates age-appropriate life skills training for eligible youth who are likely to remain in foster care until age 18. It assists with services and purchases that enable the youth to fulfill educational goals that may include high school graduation and post-secondary education. This includes college or university training, vocational training, and assistance in finding career and job opportunities. In addition, the program may assist emancipated youth that choose not to continue their education past high school to establish a residence. (Youth can be emancipated by court order only.) There are many levels of assistance and instruction available to youth who choose to participate in the program. All assistance and instruction should be provided in accordance with the child's case plan.

Foster / Kinship Care Services - The Division provides services to children whose biological parents cannot care for them, by providing a planned period of care by approved foster parents, including relatives who are approved as foster parents, and by planning for reunification or placement in another permanent living arrangement. Time-Limited Family Reunification services (described below) are part of the services delivered to children in foster care and their families.

Child Abuse Neglect/Prevention – The Division distributes materials throughout the State to field offices, schools, Family Resource Centers and medical facilities. These materials target the reduction/awareness of child abuse and neglect. Materials have the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline number printed on it.

DCFS Child Protective Services staff provides and facilitates training on Substance Abuse, Anger Management and Effective Parenting. Training is geared toward staff working directly with families, staff from Family Resource Centers and schools. The DCFS Director serves on the Arkansas Child Abuse Prevention Commission (ACAPC) which provides for increased coordination of efforts between the agencies, Executive Director of ACAPC, and also serves on the DCFS Advisory Committee.

The Family Resource Centers and our Human Service Workers in Schools are considered preventive programs due to the fact that families can receive assistance and not have a case in DCFS. In fact, the primary reason for these two services is to prevent the necessity of opening a case.

Intervention and Treatment - The Division offers several services to children and families. Intensive Family Services, Anger Management, Parenting Education, Interpreter Services, Psychological Evaluations, Drug Screenings, Assessments and Treatment (limited), Respite Care and Counseling are services offered to families to resolve issues that could cause removal of the child.

Purchased Services include the following:

- Statewide comprehensive medical examinations for foster children through a contract with the University of Arkansas Medical School's Department of Pediatrics.
- Assessment, diagnosis and therapy services for adolescent sexual offenders through a contract with the University of Arkansas Medical School's Department of Pediatrics
- Individual, family, and group therapy and various individual and group counseling services from private agencies, mental health associations, or private practitioners throughout the state.

- Professional language interpreters statewide when serving families that do not speak English.
- Sign Language Interpreter services
- Emergency shelters for children and teens.
- Purchased services to children in the custody and care of DCFS include therapeutic foster home programs, psychiatric residential treatment, comprehensive residential treatment, residential treatment, respite care, health services, independent living
- Respite care
- Therapeutic groups for foster and adopted teens
- Adoption and foster care recruitment activities
- Training for DCFS staff, adoptive parents, foster parents and adopted children
- Adoption support groups
- Life books for children in foster care
- Adoption resource libraries

Additional Adoption Promotion and Support Services

- In-home consultation visits with prospective adoptive families
- Adoption home studies
- Adoption summaries on waiting children
- Non-identifying summaries on adoptees
- Adoption subsidies
- Adoption Registry services

2. Collaboration

The Division continues to have strong professional relationships with many groups and collaborates with a variety of stakeholders. In preparing for the Child and Family Services Review this last year, many community stakeholders were involved and participated in providing feedback on current goals and initiatives as well as suggesting and volunteering to assist with new initiatives as we improve our programs for children in families in Arkansas. We have sustained our committees, but many of them have sub-committees that work on specific goals.

The Foster Parent Recruitment Committee - The purpose of the committee is to develop the state foster care plan and assess its effectiveness. The committee is comprised of Resource Workers, the Planning Unit and the Central Office Adoption Unit.

The Foster Care Committee - The purpose of the committee is to develop a clear outline and timeframe for completion for the tasks involved in meeting the goals and objectives for the foster care section of the state plan. The committee is comprised of Community Service Staff and Central Office.

Foster Care Board Rate Committee -The purpose of the committee is to look at the foster care board rate for foster parents. The committee is comprised of Central Office Staff, Community Service staff and foster parents.

Workgroup for Appropriate Placement for Foster Children - The purpose of the group is to assess current placement procedures and to make recommendations for improvements. The committee is comprised of Central Office Staff, Community Service staff and Contract Providers.

AYDC Vision Team - The purpose of the team is to ensure the future employability of at risk youth that are being served by various agencies. The committee is comprised of DCFS Community Support Staff, DYS and the Department of Workforce. Collaborative agencies within the state include DYS, DCFS, Workforce Investment, Job Corps, Dept. of Education, Behavioral Health, Arkansas Transitional Employment and Employment Security and other agencies are being recruited to provide additional input and to assist with the federally funded roll-out of a communications network and hierarchy that assists the involved agencies to meet the needs of the youth we serve. The network, when in place all the way to the grass roots level should provide a structure for service agencies to identify youth in need of services, available services, service gaps, service overlaps, available funding sources, manpower commitments, shared responsibilities, local, regional and statewide links and many other ways of sharing information and resources to assist youth to get information, assistance and training to get them employed and integrated into the mainstream of jobs and industries currently in the state and those evolving in the next ten years.

Child Abuse Committee--In collaboration with the Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence, the Child Abuse Committee works with state partners to prevent child abuse and neglect. The committee members consist of agencies and groups representing Law Enforcement, Multidisciplinary Teams, Education, Mental Health, Judicial and other professional groups.

Citizen Review Panels-The Citizen Review Panels operate in Carroll, Jefferson and Ouachita Counties, reviews child maltreatment cases and the State plan. The Panels make recommendations and works with the County Offices.

Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Works with ADAP staff to help Arkansas citizen's live productive lives, free from the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Strategic Prevention Framework- (SPF) State Incentive Grant (SIG)— Advocates for prevention, intervention and education regarding the use of alcohol and drugs. Provides education and other prevention services in schools and community programs throughout the state.

Strengthening Families Initiative- A collaboration with Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education to promote the prevention of child abuse and neglect in early care and education.

Parent Involvement Task Force group headed by Dr. Nic Long, Ark Children's Hospital. Our goal is to identify and address the needs of parenting education and parent involvement in Arkansas.

Governor's Interagency Council on Early Intervention (ICC) - CPS Unit Program Manager serves as proxy for the DCFS Director. Membership of this committee consist of other DHHS agencies, the Dept. of Education, Parents, Provider Vendors, a Legislator, Dept. of Insurance, and a physician from Ark Children's Hospital.

Collaboration with TEA, the Department of Education and local School Boards regarding the Human Services Workers in the Schools.

The Homeless Outreach Event is a collaborative effort between state, federal and community providers and partners to provide a one day event where needed services are provided to homeless individuals and families. Participating agencies include: Arkansas Cares, Division of Health, Division of County Operations, Arkansas Military Department, City of North Little Rock, Salvation Army, Arkansas Supportive Housing Network, Centers for Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Housing Urban Development, Black Community Developers, U.S. Department of Veterans Administration, U.S. Department of Social Security Administration, City of Little Rock, Arkansas Department of Labor, local businesses, faith based and community based organizations. Services include: legal advocacy, mental health evaluations, dental examinations, haircuts, showers, information and referrals, health screenings (cholesterol, blood pressure, blood glucose, etc.), school supplies, employment information, hygiene care kits, immunizations and clothing. Services provided may be a catalyst for homeless individuals and families to get back into mainstream society.

Court Improvement:

DCFS has a good partnership with the Court Improvement staff in the Administrative Office of the Courts, and have participated in meetings, training, and planning retreats based on the recommendations for the CIP survey conducted by CIP. DCFS partnered with CIP as team members and reviewers in their Court Reassessment Reviews. The division plans to continue this

collaboration in the future by ensuring that they are invited and participate in the Child and Family Services Reviews, program improvement plan follow ups. They continue to be invited to participate and give input on the DCFS Advisory Board. The AOC has plans to involve DCFS in their plans and implementation of the training and data technology grants.

The Administrative Office of the Courts is partnering with DCFS in regards to recruitment of foster and adoptive homes. They have provided promotional items such as posters and billboards, covered television ads, as well as temporary staff for statewide inquiry calls.

Administrative Office of the Courts will participate in the following Program Improvement Plan groups: Recruitment and Retention Foster and Adoptive Homes; Placement Stability; Practice Training Needs; Staff Recruitment and Retention; Service Array; Independent Living Services; Adoption.

DYS and DCFS has partnered and developed an Interagency Agreement that has been implemented to better serve and plan for permanency of youth in foster care that are committed to DYS. Executive level and management staff from both Division meet at least quarterly to discuss issues, concerns, and problem solve.

DBHS and DCFS have an Interagency Agreement with the Community Mental Health Centers throughout the state to strengthen communication and ensure mental health services are provided to the children in foster care. There is regular communication and meeting with all levels of both divisions. A strategic plan has been developed with three top priorities for achievement in enhancing the communication and service timely interventions with families between these two divisions.

Child and Adolescent Service System Program is a council for improving the mental health services for children and youth in the behavioral health system. Members include public and private mental health professionals, schools professionals, DHS professional from DCFS, DDS, DBHS, DYS and other child serving divisions as well as parents and youth.

System of Care Committees: ACT 1593 and the creation of the Commission
In March 2007 the State of Arkansas approved ACT 1593 to “ establish the principles of a system of care for behavioral health care services for children and youth as the public policy of the state”. To facilitate this process, the Act created a governor-appointed Arkansas Children’s Behavioral Health Care Commission(hereafter referred to as the “Commission”) the Commission advises ADHS as it works to ensure that children, youth, and families are full partners in all facets of a SOC, revise Medicaid rules and regulations for reimbursement of behavioral health care services, define a standardized screening and assessment process, and develop a data system to support improved tracking, accountability, and decision making. The following are committees that are developing the plan: Services Support and Standards, Family Support Network, Outcome and Assessment, Training Workforce, Local Infrastructure, Cultural Competence, Financing Committee. One or more DCFS representatives serve on each committee and are active participants.

Multi Disciplinary Teams: The Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence, the Department of Human Services and the Arkansas State Police have entered into an agreement in cooperation with law enforcement agencies, prosecuting attorneys, and other appropriate agencies and individuals to implement a coordinated multidisciplinary team (MDT) approach to intervention in reports involving severe maltreatment.

The parties to this agreement are committed to a cooperative, multidisciplinary team approach to severe child maltreatment investigations.

Arkansas Program Improvement Planning:

The Division is currently in the process of preparing the Arkansas Program Improvement Plan. With involvement of state, court, provider, foster and adoptive parent, youth and community, there are seven (7) groups that are identifying key strategies, tasks and time frames for completion

Foster Care Recruitment and Retention

- Children that are removed from their homes do not experience maltreatment in out of home care through development of a sufficient array of foster homes and specialized services across the state and through adequate training, supports and relief to the caregivers. Foster home recruitment, including faith based initiatives such as The C.A.L.L. (Children of Arkansas Loved for a Lifetime) and system of care initiatives that are developing offer much hope for achievement of these goals.

Service Array

- Increase the availability and intensity of services available to families across the state.
- We need to secure community ownership in the welfare of their children and families through involvement in prevention and protection efforts.
- Services needed are delivered with the intensity needed to address and resolve family issues so that children can be returned or freed for adoption in a timely manner and that whatever permanency option is chosen, services continue to support that permanency until it is secure enough to no longer need that support.

Model of Practice

- Assuring active involvement of family, including extended family where appropriate, in the development and implementation of case plans and in the lives of their children, even if they are in out-of-home placement. We need to fully implement family team meetings, which have been tested and found productive, although time consuming.
- Continue work from previous PIP in which the Division developed and implemented a new family assessment and case plan, but need to make those tools more family- and user-friendly and ensure all staff feel comfortable using the tools as part of their practice.

- **Develop greater expertise in the areas of education and mental health among our staff and the families we serve and develop even stronger linkages between the DCFS child welfare professionals and the education, medical and mental health professionals.**
- **Increase the skill and comfort level of some staff in working with families in very difficult circumstances. We also need to increase the availability of research that informs practice in these areas. The newly formed Arkansas Partnership for Child Welfare Research (a partnership between DCFS, universities and other interested stakeholders) will be key to this research.**

Placement Stability

- **Development an array of appropriate placements, particularly foster homes but also including more specialized services as needed to meet children's special needs. As stated above, these placements need to be sufficient in number, so as to avoid the need for over-crowding, well-trained and well-supported. They need to full partners in the delivery of services, understanding their role in assuring a single placement for the child in care and committing to that. We need to assure that ties with family, friends, schools and communities can be maintained by placement close to home and planned frequent contacts. We have a great policy that requires that siblings be placed together. Increased placement resources will help us make this policy a reality.**
- **Develop a System of Care so that all children and their families can receive needed coordinated, comprehensive services in their communities.**

Adoption

- **We need to complete what we have begun in the area of adoptions – examining all processes and barriers to assuring timely adoptive placements, assuring all processes are child and family friendly and that each barrier is torn down.**

Staff Recruitment and Retention

- **To assure staffing is sufficient so that workers can have relationships with all those parties and that all staff have the skills to develop those professional helping relationships.**

Independent Living

- **Training of IL services to all field staff, services are not applied or understood across all areas. Development of a curriculum and resource needs for IL Coordinators.**
- **Development of a formalized agreement between the foster parent and the youth - OPPLA**

3. Program Support

Research and Evaluation

Supervisor Review Quarterly Report – A report that provides detailed findings from child welfare case specific reviews conducted by supervisors in every county of the state. A 100% case review is required each quarter. The report provides information statewide, by area and by county. The review serves as a one-on-one training situation on individual cases for the worker and allows the supervisor to work with the worker on practice issues. It allows the supervisor to determine if the FSW knows how to utilize best practice concepts and can work with the FSW on developing those skills.

Family Preservation Services - An evaluation that is conducted annually in accordance with state law. Among its requirements, the annual report must describe the number of families and children receiving services; track the children and pinpoint their placement status at six months and 12 months after receiving services; estimate the cost of services; and provide recommendations on progress and service delivery.

Impact of Welfare Reform on Child Welfare Reports - A report that provides information on trends in welfare reform and its effect on child welfare within the state.

Mentoring Supervisors Project – An evaluation report of the Arkansas Mentoring Supervisors Project, funded by a federal grant through the Southern Regional Quality Improvement Center of the University of Kentucky was submitted on March 31, 2006. The project is testing the impact of mentoring of supervisors and clinical supervision.

Compliance Outcome Report (COR) – A monthly report that measures compliance with 36 established performance indicators that represent a commitment to best practice.

Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) – A quarterly report that provides information on service outcomes, compliance with standards set by DCFS with guidance from the Joint Interim Arkansas legislative Children and Youth Committee and demographics of children served throughout the year.

Annual Report Card (ARC) – A report that replicates the QPR on an annual basis.

Adoption Coalitions Evaluation Report – The adoption grant is a five-year grant designed to build community coalitions throughout the state to help with general, targeted and child-specific recruitment as well as provide adoption support to families. Quarterly adoption data reports are completed that provide information such as number of children placed in pre-adoptive homes, number of finalized adoptions and length of time from TPR to adoptive placement and finalization. The grant also includes a coalition website that is utilized to gather information on things such as memberships and activities of the coalitions. Lastly, an annual evaluation is completed to determine the effectiveness of the grant activities.

The Quality Services Peer Review (QSPR) is a series of in-depth reviews to determine how well Division of Children and Family staff interact with children and families and how those

clients benefit from the services they receive. The QSPR focuses less on compliance and quantitative measures and more on the areas of practice, results and qualitative concerns.

The review is conducted using a uniform data collection tool that mirrors the tool used by the federal Children's Bureau as they conduct their Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSR).

This year's QSPR process also includes the vital component of eliciting feedback and plans for action from the areas being reviewed. The results of each Area's review will be shared with Area and County leaders who will in turn be asked to respond with a plan of action for overcoming any obstacles identified during the review. This feedback loop helps ensure that clear and, more importantly, effective communication is maintained between Division Central Office staff and field staff before, during and after the review

All of the above-listed reports are planned for 2008.

Technical Assistance

Arkansas requested and received technical assistance to provide a workshop at the Arkansas Mental Health Pre Institute in August of 2007. April Naturale with NRC Foster Care and Permanency planning conducted the reinstitute on Child Trauma. April Naturale also presented a workshop at the Child Abuse and Neglect Conference in Arkansas held April 9-11, 2008 at the request of DCFS. Both these conferences are open to providers and families within the State that serve children and families and are partners with DCFS.

Arkansas requested and received technical assistance by the NRC for Organization Improvement to assist the DCFS Director in conducting a system assessment or Central Office and field.

Arkansas requested and received technical assistance from the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development for a Youth Panel at the Foster Parent Conference in October. The conference was not held so the TA was not utilized.

Arkansas participated in the second round of Child and Family Services review in January 2008. Based on the exit interview and anticipated outcomes, Arkansas does anticipate accessing ACFT/TA in preparing and implementing the Program Improvement Plan. Arkansas anticipate requesting assistance from the following National Resource Centers: Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning; Child Welfare Data and Technology; Resource Center for Adoption; and for Youth Development.

Training Plan –2008 - 2009

Value Statement

This document is the training plan for all employees and volunteers within DCFS. The purpose of training within DCFS is to give staff and volunteers' skills they need to accomplish the agency mission.

Purpose

The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) recognizes and values the dedication of all employees. DCFS goals of child protection and family preservation will only be achieved through the work of highly trained and motivated child welfare staff. We believe that the pursuit of excellence and achievement of Division goals outlined within the Belief Based Performance Management System requires the exposure of workers to new and innovative training material involving best practices in child welfare.

Funding Authority

Authority for establishment of a Title IV-E training program and claiming reimbursement for such a program is cited at 45 FTR 1356.60(b).

DCFS Professional Development Unit (PDU)

The mission of the PDU is to support training activities in DCFS through monitoring of the Academic Partnership training contracts, processing of requests to attend workshops and conferences and reimbursement of training-related expenses of those individuals who serve IV-E children. The PDU is administratively located within the Legislative, Analysis, Research and Planning Unit (LARP) of DCFS.

Who Can Be Trained

Personnel employed in all classes of positions, volunteers and persons preparing for employment by DCFS may be trained and the cost of this training can be claimed for reimbursement under the IV-E program. This includes students preparing for employment in DCFS and DCFS child welfare staff seeking the Masters Degree in Social Work. Training may also be provided to current and prospective foster, kinship and adoptive parents and members of state licensed or approved child care institutions providing care to foster and adopted children receiving IV-E assistance.

Training Resources

Training is provided to DCFS staff and volunteers through contracts with the Academic Partnership, DCFS in-house providers, other state, local and federal resources, and private training providers. Although most training events take place within the state, there may be some

critical training only available out of state. Training resources include Internet/Intranet sites, compressed interactive video training events (CIV), and lending resource libraries maintained by the Academic Partnership sites. Depending upon training media selected, training sites may include:

- **The University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR)** MidSOUTH Training Center sites in Fayetteville, Jonesboro, Arkadelphia, Monticello, and in Little Rock, AR
- The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF) Arkansas Academic Partnership University/College sites (**78**)
- **Eighty one**-County Offices housing DCFS staff
- Contracted third-party training sites, such as hotels, conference centers, or municipal or other state facilities

University Partnerships

To optimally utilize IV-E training and administrative funding, the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has developed partnerships resulting in two contracts with institutions of higher education: the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) MidSOUTH Center and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF). The latter subcontracts with the following to form the Arkansas Academic Partnership:

University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, University of Arkansas at Monticello, Arkansas State University, Harding University, Arkansas Technical University, Philander Smith College, and Southern Arkansas University. These contractors have been enlisted to educate and train DCFS staff, potential staff, and foster parents and to perform defined administrative activities. The education, training and administrative activities are described in contracts developed between the agencies. Performance indicators contained in those contracts describe specific expectations of the contractors.

Allowable costs to be considered for Title IV-E funding (federal or match) include the following:

- State general revenues that are being used to fund salaries and fringe of faculty and support staff involved in programs that prepare students for employment with the state child welfare agency and directly relate to/support the contract deliverables. For degree programs that are accepted by the state agency as qualifications for Family Service Workers, any course required to get the degree as reflected in the catalog and any elective that specifically relates to IV-E could be included. Those degree programs must include persons preparing for employment with the state agency (i.e., receiving stipends.)
- Other university support departments who jointly support the deliverables of the agency who are excluded from indirect costs are also allowable.
- The university's' federally approved indirect cost rate. The university should include a copy of the letter from the appropriate Federal agency that approves their indirect cost rate.

The statewide collaboration among DCFS and nine Arkansas universities focuses on education and training to support and improve child welfare practice. The partnership objectives are to develop a family-centered child welfare curriculum and infuse it into interdisciplinary academic curricula statewide; to recruit and prepare university/college students for employment in the child welfare system administered by DCFS; and to better prepare child welfare workers and supervisory staff through state-of-the-art pre-service training and continuing education.

The University of Arkansas at Little Rock MidSOUTH Center works collaboratively with DCFS and the partnership coordinated by University of Arkansas at Fayetteville to coordinate its training activities. The MidSOUTH Training Academy operates five training centers for the purpose of providing classroom training and education for DCFS staff on a statewide basis. MidSOUTH offers the following unique classroom training and education activities:

- Pre-service training for all newly hired FSW trainees
- Leadership training
- Social Service Aide (SSA) training
- Training of Hotline Operators of the Arkansas State Police (ASP)
- Continuing education for DCFS staff, foster parents and closely allied provider staff

MidSOUTH also provides initial training to all DCFS-referred foster parents and adoptive parents including, but not limited to, Foster PRIDE / Adopt PRIDE (**P**arent's **R**esource for **I**nformation, **D**evelopment, and **E**ducation), developed by Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), as approved by DCFS Executive Staff.

MidSOUTH continuing education events are published on-line monthly and held at sites determined by required technology and targeted trainee population. Training topics are based on specific needs determined by DCFS Executive Staff and the Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) tool.

The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF) works cooperatively with DCFS and the UALR to coordinate its training activities. UAF subcontracts with seven (7) other universities for the purpose of providing statewide training and education services under overall DCFS contract. Additional responsibilities of the collective Arkansas Academic Partnership include:

- Employing field instructors for the purpose of mentoring new workers during their first year of employment
- Providing advanced practice education when requested. Additional curriculum may be developed and presented at the request of DCFS Area Managers or Executive Staff. Core-training topics are standardized for consistency of presentation throughout the Partnership
- Maintaining a child welfare resource center at each university site to allow DCFS staff the opportunity to review and check out materials and resources. An on-line listing is provided of all available materials. Developing a cooperative effort to provide training for new Partnership new field education staff and refresher training for incumbent field instructors.
- Recruiting either BSW or selected multi-disciplinary degree candidates in their senior year of college, to accept a two-semester stipend in exchange for a one year work obligation with DCFS upon graduation.

Immediately upon employment, every Family Service Worker Trainee (FSWT) will be assigned a Field Instructor from one of the contracted Universities/Colleges within the Academic Partnership. The Field Instructors will provide further orientation, guidance, mentoring, skill demonstration and a knowledge base to all FSWT's during the first year of their employment to assist the new worker in adapting to their new positions and responsibilities. This mentoring will assist the FSWT in passing their panel review, which is usually held after the first 5 months of employment. The panel review is a process involving a representative body of DCFS Area field administrative staff, appointed by the Area Manager that meets prior to the 6th month of FSWT employment, to review the work and knowledge of the FSWT.

Current Training

Orientation –The purpose of the orientation process is to provide information to the participant concerning the program in which they are involved. Items covered(syllabus) include DCFS policies and procedures, guidelines, timeframes, structure and nature of work and responsibilities, required paperwork and expected behaviors including ethical behavior, confidentiality, legal rights of clients that we work with, and continuous quality improvement processes. Orientations have been developed for all staff within DCFS and for foster parents.

The following orientation processes and forms are available for new employees and volunteers:

- All DCFS Employees (program and non-program employees). Each hiring supervisor must complete and submit to DHHS/DCFS Personnel the following orientation processes within 30 work days (Short term)of the date of hire:

DHHS 1101-New Employee Orientation Checklist

DCFS CFS-1136 New Employee Orientation Checklist Addendum

Additional program new worker orientation and on-the-job training is included within DCFS New Worker Training (NWT) provided by MidSOUTH Training Academy.

- All foster and kinship parents, upon completion of their mandated pre-service and approval as a foster or kinship home, will be provided with an orientation provided by DCFS staff, using the following approved form:

CFS – 465 DCFS Foster Parent Orientation Checklist

Additional foster/kinship parent orientation is included in the foster/kinship parent pre-service training.

- Provisional Relative Foster Homes may have a child placed before being licensed, but all licensing requirements are to be met within 6 months of placement. This orientation form must be completed and signed by the family before the child is left in the home:

CFS – 474 Provisional Foster Home Orientation Checklists

- Volunteers, not providing foster or adoptive services to the agency, are covered by DHHS Policy 1027.

All orientation training is to be completed within 30 days and is considered short term training. The training generally takes 3-6 hours to complete. The administrative functions supported include referral to services and case management. The settings a part of initial in-service and provided by in house agency staff. The audience is new employees and new approved foster parents and/or volunteers. The average number of expected participants is 1206.

Returning FSW (Family Service Worker) or FSW Supervisor Employees

DCFS employees who return to field work after a break in service, with the responsibility as a Family Services Worker or FSW Supervisor shall be interviewed by the Area Manager for the purpose of determining their retention of best practice information, policy and procedures involved in their assigned roles in child welfare.

If it is determined that the re-entering FSW requires full re-education, the Area Manager or designee will contact their respective MidSOUTH Training Academy and determine the next available NWT class for scheduling their participation in the entire NWT training curriculum. If the returning FSW needs only updates in policy and procedures only, then they shall be scheduled by the Area Manager or designee to attend only the “practice” modules 5-8 in the NWT curriculum.

If it is determined that the re-entering FSW Supervisor has a deficiency in any area, the returning supervisor shall be scheduled to attend related appropriate modules found in the current DCFS Supervisor curriculum, to upgrade the knowledge and skills of the employee to an acceptable level of performance.

If the returning workers are required to attend all or part of these classes, The returning employee’s supervisor will ensure the employee’s work schedule shall be adjusted to permit their attendance in these classes during their initial re-employment period. If no retraining is deemed necessary by the Area Manager, the returning FSW or FSW Supervisor will bypass these courses, but will not receive training hour credit for them.

New Worker Training

All pre-service NWT for program staff has been approved by the DCFS Executive Staff and is provided by UALR MidSOUTH Training Academy. The curriculum is based upon worker competencies developed by the Institute for Human Services (IHS). New FSW trainees are scheduled within the first two weeks of employment. Classes are delivered by university staff through one of five sites throughout the state to allow the new worker closer access to both their office and home. Due to the intensity of the NWT and assigned on-the-job training requirements and responsibilities, the FSWT shall carry a maximum workload of five (5) secondary cases. The overall training event provides classroom

lecture, activities, discussion, training strategies involving all learning styles, and on-the-job field training for skill development. Both pre-and post-testing is used for each module and for the course as a whole.

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

FSWT New Staff Training is competency-based training for newly hired family service workers consisting of twenty- **four** days (**144** hours) of classroom instruction, conducted over a ten week period. The training is preceded by a one week in-office orientation phase and interspersed with field instruction and standardized on the job training activities while not in the classroom. **This curriculum also includes training on the Division's SACWIS data system and the Children's Incident Reporting System (CHRIS).** Classroom instruction consists of training in (syllabus)

- **Family Centered Approaches to Practice**
- **Dynamics of child Maltreatment**
- **Introduction to Casework Communication**
- **Effects of Maltreatment on Development**
- **Child Maltreatment Assessment**
- **Foster Care: Out of Home Placement**
- **Best Practice in Foster Care**
- **Assessment and Case Planning**

In the past year, fifteen FSW new staff training events were conducted involving 188 participants. This classroom training is provided at one of the five MidSOUTH Training Academy locations throughout the state. The administrative functions for this training includes IV-E eligibility determination or re determination, referral to services, development and maintained of case plan, and case management. Setting/venue is initial in services, long term training as it is over a period of 10 weeks or 132 hours. The provider is MidSOUTH (contract provider). The audience is for new family service workers and supervisors (who are new to the Division). Average number of expected participants is 188.

Continuing Education Training-

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

Continuing Education training offers a variety of training sessions for foster/adoptive parents and staff based upon information and needs gained through Individual Training Needs Assessments, Council on Accreditation requirements, Program Improvement Plan mandates, Legislative requirements, and DHHS/DCFS Executive Staff directives. Training is developed and scheduled as needed. These classroom training activities may be held at any of the partnership university sites, or other public or private facilities in the state. (syllabus) Training topics include but are not limited to: worker safety, grief and loss, ethics, parenting, substance abuse, effects of child abuse/neglect, mandated reporting, working with sexually abused children, time management, stress management, case planning, risk assessment, interviewing young children, ICPC policy,

The Administrative functions supported are: referral to services, placement of child, development and maintained of case plan.

Venue/setting is continuing in-service training and the providers are MidSouth (contractor), in house agency staff, and public University. The course is short term and range from 3-6 hours. The audience is staff, volunteers, foster parents, adoptive parents, and community providers. The combined average number (may include multiple participation) of expected participants for continuing education courses is 3672.

These events may be directly provided by or through Academic Partnership or DCFS staff, contracted or community providers, and may either be mandated or elective. These classes are open to all DCFS staff, foster / adoptive parents, and childcare agencies receiving IV-E assistance, unless the nature of the training class targets a specific work group within DCFS or if considered inappropriate due to confidentiality issues. Additional training may be provided through third-party vendors, and may be attended through formal application and registration procedures. These formal training events are usually three to six hours in length, but may extend to three days, depending upon topic.

Central Office Staff Training

Each hiring supervisor shall review a new employee's training experience to determine whether specific information may be gained through training events designed to enhance knowledge or performance with the employee's job function. Both incumbent and new employees shall be evaluated through the annual PPES / CLIP process and training issues may be addressed through development of a staff training plan to target job tasks requiring improvement or enhancement. Management position orientation, for those new employees with no prior supervisory experience in DCFS, may include attendance in selected modules of New Worker Training provided by MidSOUTH. These formal training events are usually one to two days in length, depending upon topic. Informal training activities, not held in a scheduled classroom environment may last only a few hours in duration.

DCFS Central Office employees shall be permitted to attend training found applicable to their job performance. Supervisors may use formal training events, as well as media such as videotape, CD, DVD, printed material or through interview/shadowing of a topic expert. (Syllabus) Training may include but not limited to: computer programs such as excel, access; stress management; any MidSouth continuing education course listed above) that would be relevant to job function, ethics. The administrative functions supported referral to services. The setting/venue is continuing in-service provided by MidSouth (contractor) and/or in house agency staff, and public university. It is considered short term and ranges from 3-6 hours. The audience is staff out of Central office, but may include other divisional staff and volunteers. Average number of participants expected is 20.

Social Service Aides (SSA) –

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

- **Social Service Aide Training is a knowledge/skill based training for Social Service Aides consisting of Short term training of twelve days (72 hours) of classroom**

instruction, conducted over a four week period. This is considered Initial In-Service and can be provided as continuing in service. (Syllabus) Training topics address several skills areas-introduction/overview of DCFS; family centered services; communications; engaging families; child development; child health issues; substance abuse training; time management; stress management; documentation; team building; physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse; legal issues; including a two-day segment on Active Parenting Leader training. The administrative functions supported are referral to services, preparation for and participation in judicial determinations, placement of child, and maintenance of case plan. In the past year three Social Service Aide training events were conducted involving 34 participants. This included new SSAII as well as some designated existing SSAII as referred by supervisor. This classroom training is offered only at the Little Rock MidSOUTH Training Academy and provided by MidSouth trainers (contractors). The average number of participants expected is 34.

Additional continuing education training sessions are offered to the Social Service Aide staff as requested or mandated.

Adoptions Staff-Short Term Training

Orientation sessions for Adoption Specialists are available through Central Office Adoptions Staff as required for new staff. This short term training consists of session that from 3-6 hours per day for a total of average 32 hours and includes topics (syllabus) such as DCFS policy on adoptions; recruitment and retention of adoptive applicants; applications of adoptive applicants; development of adoptive placement; re-evaluation of adoptive homes; selections of adoptive placement including disclosure, pre placement and placement activities; post adoptive services; disruption of adoptive placement; completing adoptive home studies; subsidy. The average number of participants expected is 10.

The *Spaulding for Children Adoption Curriculum* is available for presentation to DCFS Adoptions Supervisors and Coordinators through UALR MidSOUTH. The curriculum This short term training consists of six one day sessions that result in a total of 36 hours of training in topics (syllabus) such as:

- Day 1 – Special Needs Adoption: Meeting the Needs of the Waiting Children
- Day 2 – Skill building in Family Preparation and Assessment
- Day 3 – Skill Building in Family Preparation and assessment and the Family Summary
- Day 4 – Post Placement Services
- Day 5 – Foster Parent Adoption
- Day 6 – Family Preparation in Foster Parent Adoption

The average number of participants expected is 30 per session.

Adoption Specialists also participated in their Area Foster Parent Conference training sessions, and will attend other continuing education training as identified by supervisory

staff. The Adoption Unit also assisted in the planning and coordination of the Statewide Adoptions Conference held September 2007.

The administrative functions supported would be referral to services, placement of child, development and maintenance of case plan.

Independent Living (IL) Coordinators

Monthly meetings and phone conferences have been held for IL Coordinators and used as a forum for providing training in policy and methods. The Independent Living Unit Central Office Staff and UALR MidSOUTH curriculum development staff have discussed and developed additional training specifically targeted for the IL Coordinators. These continuing education courses, exclusively for IL Coordinators, include Legal Training, Organizational Skills, Case Planning, and Mentoring, and were conducted January through March 2007. Independent Living Coordinators will attend other continuing education training as identified by supervisory staff. The Independent Living Unit had requested DCFS approval for attendance in a national-level IL conference to increase their level of knowledge of current issues in IL. The Independent Living Coordinator positions are the FSW and/or SSAII and this training is a part of the New Worker and SSAII training reported elsewhere in this report. A Program Improvement Plan work group is currently meeting to identify additional training issues that concern the IL staff. The average number of expected participants is 20. The duration of this training is 3 hours. (short term) the administrative functions supported would be referral to services, placement of child, development and maintenance of case plan.

Training for Foster / Adoptive / Relative Foster / Provisional Relative Foster Homes –These homes include the following: Foster Family Home (Non Relative); Adoptive Home; Relative Foster Home (Kinship Only); Relative Foster Home (Fostering and Kinship); and Provisional Relative Foster Home.

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

Foster/Adopt PRIDE is a competency-based, pre-service training provided for prospective foster/adoptive parents. The Foster/Adopt **PRIDE** (Parents' Resource for Information, Development, and Education) training curriculum was developed by the Child Welfare League of America and consists of nine, three hour modules totaling 27 hours of instruction. In the past year, fifty-five Foster/Adopt PRIDE training events were conducted for 948 persons. This classroom training is offered throughout the state as determined by the geographic concentration of DCFS referrals to MidSOUTH. Sessions may be held in community centers, State Offices, churches, or other public or private facilities.

Prior to final home approval, these volunteers are required to complete the thirty hour DCFS pre-service training curriculum. DCFS staff will provide a formal orientation by completion of the CFS-465 (Foster Parent Orientation Checklist) at the end of the training course. Provisional Relative Foster Homes are required to complete the training required to meet standards within 6 months of the immediate placement of the child in their home.

This training includes (syllabus) making connections; creating teams; meeting development needs-attachments; Loss; Discipline; Strengthening family relationships; continuing family relationships; planning for change; making an informed decision; and taking pride. The administrative function supported is referral to services; placement of child; maintenance of case plan; recruitment/licensing of foster/adoptive homes and institutions. The setting is Pre Services. This is for foster parents and adoptive parents who are not employees of the State and will not be. The training is provided by MidSOUTH (contract) or in some instances by in-house staff. It is short term training as it consists of one 3-6 hours day per week training for a total of 27 hours of training. The audience is volunteers, foster parents, adoptive parents, and designated child placement staff. The average number of participants expected is 948.

All foster and adoptive parents (as identified above) are required to attend and be certified in first aid and CPR. All homes are required to complete and maintain certification in first aid, but only foster family (non-relative) homes are required to attend and maintain full certification covering infant-child-adult CPR. Other homes, if only accepting fostering of relatives, will only be required to complete and maintain certification in the age level appropriate CPR as follows: infant (birth through 1 year of age); child (1 year through 8 years of age); and adult (age 8 years of age through adulthood). Acceptable national training providers include the following: American Red Cross (first aid and CPR); American Heart Association (first aid and CPR); or National Safety Council (Standard/Basic First Aid only). **Foster parents must maintain certification in CPR and first aid to remain opened as a DCFS foster home, but these training hours are not used in computation of their annual training hour requirement.** Since various certification time frame durations occur with the acceptable CPR provider group (1 or 2 years), the foster parent must adhere to and be responsible for maintaining their certification requirements. DCFS is responsible for scheduling first aid and CPR training for these homes and foster / adoptive homes will be reimbursed for successful completion of classes scheduled through DCFS using in-house or approved training providers. The average expected participants in this training are 1206. Administrative functions supported would be placement of child and development and maintenance of case plan.

The DCFS Foster Care Technical Assistance Unit staff will review all pre-service and in-service training successfully completed by foster parents prior to entering service within Arkansas. All prior training will be reviewed and if any deficiencies are noted they will be addressed through training through DCFS or MidSOUTH trainers. These deficiencies may include best practice issues, legal or policy information.

Additional training for these homes is available through continuing education classes provided statewide by the University Partnership as well as the Area Foster Parent Conference and the State Annual Foster Parent Conference. Applications to attend training are processed and scheduled through local DCFS foster / adoptive parent liaison. DCFS bears the expense for DHHS foster /adoptive parents in attending classes to meet annual hourly training requirements, as scheduled through DCFS.

Volunteer Training- DHS has a Division of Volunteerism that provides the training and oversight of volunteers. DCFS is removing this as a part of their programs.

Additional Training Opportunities

Additional training opportunities for DCFS employees and foster parents may include attendance in training events offered through third-party vendors and conferences. Regular training conferences include Arkansas Human Services Employees Conference (AHSEA), MidSOUTH Summer School (MSSS), DCFS Area Training Meetings, Regional Training Conferences provided through the Academic Partnership, Mental Health Institute, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Annual Conference, and the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Conference held by the Division of Youth Services. Several of the larger state conferences provide a limited number of scholarships for DCFS staff and foster parents. The average expected attendance at these conferences combined is 185. This is determined by budget and staff availability. These conferences would support at least one of the following administrative functions: referral to services, preparation for and participation in judicial determinations, placement of child, development and maintenance of case plan, case management, recruitment/licensing of foster/adoptive homes and institutions. The venue is continuing in service and conference/workshop. The proposed provider may include in house agency training staff, public university, or MidSouth (contract) and Juvenile Justice.

Independent Study

Additional available training may include video or audio based instruction, online training opportunities as well as DCFS or Partnership library instructional materials and books. These trainings include child welfare subjects. The administrative functions supported would be placement of child and case management. The audience is for DCFS staff, university students, foster and adoptive parents, as well as community partners. The venue/setting is continuing in service and is provided by the public university and MidSouth (contract). It is short term training that foster parents are allowed to have 5 hours per year. The average expected participants are 35.

Supervisory Training Requirements-

All DCFS supervisors are required to attend the following training events provided by the Department of Human Services (DHHS) and DCFS:

Syllabus:

- DHS 3-Day Supervisor Training (with update training every 5 years) includes PPES, Administrative Policy, and EEO Laws. Hiring Procedures and Grievances.
- DHS Interpersonal Communications (2-day class)
- **DHS Leadership in a High Performance Culture (2-day class)**
- DCFS Supervisor Training (9-day class)

Upon employment as a supervisor, the employee will be contacted by DHS Staff Development and informed of their required attendance in the mandated supervisor training held in Little Rock. The supervisor training provided through DHS must precede all DCFS New Supervisor Training provided through UALR. Upon receipt of a copy of the DHS-1161 form from PDU, Midsouth Training Academy will contact the new DCFS supervisor to inform them of the schedule to attend the DCFS New Supervisor Training. Supervisors may also attend the Certified Public Manager course, with approval of the DCFS Executive Staffs. Additional elective or mandated training may be scheduled for the targeted supervisor within DCFS.

DCFS Supervisors with any break in employment or supervisory responsibility must re-attend all seven days of the DHHS Supervisor Training requirements. **DCFS field Supervisors returning to employment in the field after a break in employment will be evaluated under the previous procedure listed under, *Current Training, Returning FSW Classification Workers or Supervisors*, in this document to determine if retraining in DCFS Supervisor Training is needed.**

Current Training

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

Supervisor/Leadership Training is a competency-based training for new FSW supervisors and program managers consisting of nine days (51 hours) of classroom instruction, conducted over a three week period. The training also includes a series of on-line tutorials to be completed outside the classroom and purposeful interaction with a field instructor/mentor. Classroom instruction is provided in three segments:

- Principles of Leadership
- Working with Others, and
- Nuts and Bolts of Supervision.

In the past year, three Supervisor/Leadership training events were conducted for 36 supervisors/program managers. This classroom training is offered only at the Little Rock Midsouth Training Academy.

DCFS non-supervisory employees who are approved by their supervisory chain, including their respective Assistant Director, identified as Division career employees and have two years of continuous employment immediately prior to their application, may be allowed to attend the Leadership training curriculum provided through Midsouth Training Academy. Approval to attend this training does not automatically identify or otherwise pre-select this employee for a supervisory position.

Administrative functions supported are hearings and appeals, referral to services, case management. The setting/venue is Initial in-services and continuing training. Training is provided by in house agency training staff and MidSouth (contract). This is short term training that is covered over a 6 month to 1 year time frame and then updated every 5 years over a period of 3 days. The total hours average 93 hours. The audience is staff of State/local agency administering the State Plan. The average number of participants expected is 36.

Training Needs Assessments

The purpose of conducting a staff training needs assessment is to identify the training needs of an employee or volunteer and use this information to develop continuing education training events and county/area/state annual training plans. The assessment is only valuable if it results in training that is relevant, significant and available to the person. DCFS provides three dedicated Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) tools, two for program staff (e.g., FSW, FSW supervisor), and one for foster parents.

DCFS Central Office Staff

At the time designated for the employee's annual performance evaluation (PPES), DCFS Supervisors will review the employee's past training sessions attendance by the employee and with the employee's input, determine the need for specific training topics for the coming year to meet their annual training hour requirement.

DCFS Program Staff

At the time designated for the employee's annual performance evaluation (PPES), DCFS Supervisors will complete an Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) for each Program employee and forward a copy to UALR Midsouth who will collect and report to the PDU all ITNA information for DCFS FSWs, and Supervisors. ITNA criteria for FSW and supervisor positions are based upon standards provided by the Institutes for Human Services (IHS). **The supervisor will utilize this information plus additional employee input to determine future employee training necessary to meet their annual training hour requirement.**

Foster / Adoptive Home

At the time of the foster parent's annual evaluation, the foster parent evaluator (i.e., contractor or agency employee) will conduct an ITNA with the foster parents and will forward a copy of the results to UALR MidSOUTH who will collect and report to the PDU all ITNA information relating to foster parents. The foster parent ITNA is based on ten competencies developed by the authors of the mandated pre-service curriculum. The DCFS Adoptions Specialist assigned to the adoptive family will meet to determine and address training needs after Foster Pride / Adopt Pride Training, and will continue until the adoptive home is approved.

DCFS Supervisory staff and Foster Parent Liaisons are to review identified needs through the respective ITNAs and schedule attendance in needed training activities.

DCFS Financial Assistance for Education

Two programs are available under DCFS Policy XI-A, DCFS Educational Leave and Educational Assistance, to encourage and assist employees in achievement of an academic degree benefiting the Division. The policy addresses the types of leave and assistance available, the application and selection processes and criteria, related personnel and contract processes, and participant benefits and responsibilities under the program. In administering the DCFS Educational Leave and Educational Assistance Program, DCFS will comply with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act. The program will be administered without regard to age, religion, disability, political affiliation, veteran status, sex, race, color, or national origin. The DCFS PDU conducts monitoring of the programs. **DCFS budgetary deficits may negatively impact the number of applicants accepted for the DCFS MSW Educational Leave Program.**

Recipients of financial support for either program are contractually obligated to commit to employment in a direct service position for a specified period of time within DCFS. Should the participant default on the repayment of field service to DCFS through either refusal to maintain state employment or inability to remain otherwise employable during the contract repayment period, the participant shall repay the full or prorated expense within the originally established repayment timeframe.

Master of Social Work (MSW) Educational Leave Program

The purpose of the DCFS MSW Education Leave Program is to enable the Division to employ an increased number of persons who possess the MSW degree to work in programs throughout the state that serve Title IV-E children. DCFS Policy No. XI-B establishes guidelines for administering the DCFS MSW Educational Leave Program, and addresses both full and part-time agreements. Candidates must first gain acceptance from an Arkansas MSW Graduate Program before the application is considered within DCFS and the applicant must be a current employee for two years immediately prior to the initiation of the application process. Policy and the agreement mandate a 2-for-1-employment repayment.

Senior Year Stipend Program

The purpose of the DCFS Child Welfare Student Stipend Program is to hire more employees with degrees in social work and limited social work-related degrees on a statewide basis to work in DCFS programs serving Title IV-E eligible children. DCFS Policy XI-C establishes guidelines for administering the DCFS Child Welfare Student Stipend Program.

University student stipend applicants follow their respective university application process and undergo the interview process with the University IV-E Coordinator for acceptance into the university stipend program. Applications and other related paperwork are submitted to the DCFS PDU for review and processing. Upon timely submission and completion of all policy-mandated forms, drug testing, and histories (i.e., criminal background, driving record, Central Registry, drug tests) are returned, the application packet is forwarded to the Division Director for disposition. If approved, stipends are awarded for two semesters of the applicant's senior year. Upon graduation, the student is employed by the Division and must remain employed for a minimum of one year, as a condition of the stipend agreement.

Acceptable degrees for stipend applicants are identical to the minimum qualifications for employment as a DCFS Family Service Worker, which are the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in social work, sociology, psychology or a related field. Related fields are identified as:

- ✓ Child and Family Development
- ✓ Child Development
- ✓ Counseling (any field of Counseling)
- ✓ Family Development
- ✓ Family Services
- ✓ Human Development and Family Studies
- ✓ Human Services
- ✓ Rehabilitation Science
- ✓ Social Welfare
- ✓ Behavior Science
- ✓ Criminal Justice
- ✓ Education (Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle Level, Secondary, and Special Education)
- ✓ Home Economics/Family and Consumer Science

Training Requirements for Licensure or Certification

Employees possessing national or state certification or licensure determined by the DCFS Executive Staff to be essential for the mission of the agency shall be permitted time to obtain training credit hours to maintain such certification. These licenses or certifications may include, but are not limited to, Licensed Social Workers, Licensed Professional Counselors, and Nursing. These licenses are regulated by State licensing boards, and employees must be using their license in a job-related capacity. Holders of these or other approved licenses/certifications will be permitted to apply and attend classes/training events for the purpose of gaining sufficient knowledge and training hours to maintain their license/certification. Approvals by Executive Staff of the status of the employee's need for certification will allow future training applications to be processed through normal channels of approval. All attendance will be subject to availability and budget restrictions. These targeted training events will be considered a priority in scheduling training for the employee and would be scheduled before other non-credentialing training attendance.

Credit/Exemption for Prior Training

Employees are required to attend classes for which it has been determined that their attendance is mandatory. If the employee or supervisor believes an exemption from training is justifiable, based on completion of previous training and demonstrated competency, then a memorandum requesting exemption is passed through the supervisory chain to the DCFS Executive Staff. Either the employee or the supervisor may generate the request. Exemption will not be granted solely on the basis of academic degree.

For the request to be considered, the employee's supervisor must also approve the request, and attach details of the previous attendance, date and time of the training, examples of superior knowledge, documentation of demonstrated skills within the workplace, copies of the training material from the attended training, and verifiable copy of the training certificate or letter of attendance. After review of the documents, the DCFS Executive Staff will notify the supervisor of their decision.

Actual credit hours will not be awarded to an employee who is exempted from a mandated training topic. If, after granting an exemption for a class, the employee's skills are viewed as unacceptable in the knowledge/performance area, the employee will be required to attend the class for which exemption was awarded to ensure that the knowledge base is present. Credit hours would then be awarded for completion of the attended training event.

Training Topics and Resources

Training topics are determined by federal mandates, Council on Accreditation (COA) requirements, Program Improvement Plan (PIP) mandates, Arkansas legislation, DHHS and DCFS policy/procedure, individual supervisory-administered needs assessments and performance reviews, and approved employee-expressed need gained through the ITNA or written / verbal requests. Additional needs may be identified by the DCFS Executive Staff or through the use of general Division-wide assessment instrument on an annual basis. All training topics are reviewed and approved by the DCFS Executive Staff on an annual basis.

Training Records and Attendance Documentation

All participation by DCFS staff and volunteers in Academic Partnership-sponsored training events will be recorded within a training database maintained by the sponsoring institution. UAF is responsible for gathering attendance information from their seven subcontracted university training providers and for maintaining a centralized training records database. All Partnership training records will be exported monthly to the DCFS **CH**ildren's **R**eporting and **I**nformation **S**ystem (CHRIS). DCFS staff with a "supervisor" level of security may view and print employee training records from the CHRIS system.

Central Office supervisory staff and Area Managers (or designees) will initiate and maintain a CFS-381 Employee Training Record for all employees. Supervisors will enter all attended training on the form and include copies of attendance verification within the folder. Area Managers (or designee) will enter all non-Partnership training attendance into CHRIS through the Training Toolbar function. Central Office supervisors (or designee) will likewise enter their employee's non-Partnership training into the CHRIS training database.

Both Midsouth Center and the Academic Partnership will provide documentation of training attendance to participants in the form of certificate, copy of sign-in sheet or letter of attendance. Information contained in these proofs of attendance shall have information concerning the training event identical to information areas found on the CFS-476 DCFS Training Certificate. In submitting forms for travel/expense reimbursement, DCFS participants shall attach verification of training attendance to the DHS TR1 Form. Attendance in training events, other than the University Partnership providers, participants shall obtain some form of attendance verification for their training records and expense reimbursement. Training provided in-house may be recorded on the CFS-476 and given to participants for their use.

Training Reports

Both Midsouth and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, representing the Arkansas Academic Partnership, will submit reports of compliance with training contract performance indicators required monthly to the IV-E Training Coordinator in the DCFS PDU for compliance review.

Training Announcements and Registration

Training announcements and schedules provided by the Academic Partnership are found on their respective websites:

- UALR Midsouth – <http://www.midsouth.ualr.edu/>
- UAF Partnership - <http://www.uark.edu/depts/scwk/partnership/index.html>

Additional training notifications will be made through intranet announcements to targeted DCFS employees.

All DCFS staff must complete a CFS-360 Request for Conference/Training application to attend an "elective" training event whether or not an expense is involved, but if the training is deemed mandatory, staff is not required to submit a CFS-360. Registration forms required by the sponsoring training event will also be completed and attached to the CFS-360. **The CFS-360 may be given final approval by the Area Manager for attendance in training provided through the UAF Partnership or UALR Midsouth Training Academies.**

Annual Review of the Training Plan

The Professional Development Team (PDT) will review this training plan on an annual basis (SFY) and a report of recommendations will be submitted to the DCFS Director for review. Upon receipt of comments from the DCFS Director, the PDT will incorporate all recommendations and directives and modify the DCFS Training Plan for publication to DCFS staff by July 15th of each year.

Required Training Hours

Employees of DCFS are mandated to attend a minimum number of **job-related** annual training contact hours each year as set forth in these guidelines:

- Program staff (field staff, direct client contact and caseloads), Family Service Worker (FSW) classification, Area Managers - Twenty-four (24) annual hours required.
- Program Support staff (direct client contact, secondary or no caseload), Nurses, Health Services Workers, Health Services Specialists, SSAII, ILC - Fifteen (15) annual hours required.
- Non-program staff (administrative support, office personnel, administration having no direct client contact [DCFS Central Office] including DCFS Executive Staff) - Fifteen (15) annual hours required.
- Volunteers include persons serving in a foster or adoptive care capacity for DCFS - Thirty (30) hours pre-approval and fifteen (15) annual hours required after approval. Training hour requirement for adoptive homes will cease upon the completion of the adoptive process. Volunteers who are not serving in a foster or adoptive capacity, such as community volunteers or interns, are required to attend five (5) hours per year.
- **All DCFS child welfare program field staff who have or may have contact with clients are required to maintain certification in first aid and CPR (infant, child and adult) provided at DCFS' expense through either the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association.**

The time frame used for completion of annual training hours shall be based on the calendar year, unless specific training mandates require credit prior to the calendar year time frame.

Additional Training Development Teams and Groups

DCFS will host Professional Development Team (PDT) meetings at the DCFS Central Office in Little Rock to ensure that educational activities under the University Partnership IVE contracts (UALR and UAF) are appropriately identified, discussed, developed and provided. Meetings shall be held quarterly or as needed. PDT members will include DCFS Executive Staff, DCFS Planning Manager, Professional Development Unit staff and IVE Contract Principals from UALR and UAF. Other individuals may be invited to participate at the request of the group

The Partnership Steering Committee ("Partnership Meeting") is hosted by UAF and meets quarterly with the DCFS Executive Staff and other designated participants to discuss partnership progress, monitor compliance and resolve problems identified by DCFS and UAF.

DCFS Responsibilities in Curriculum Development with Midsouth Center. In order to accomplish the effective transfer of information to Midsouth Center for their curriculum development, it is necessary for a curriculum pre-development group to meet to determine core issues and information needing to be included in the mandated training, along with the applicable promulgated policy. Participants in this group will include Executive Staff (or assigned designees) with knowledge with knowledge and interest in the development of critical topics to be included in the curriculum, Midsouth Center staff responsible for curriculum development and the DCFS PDU Manager. Upon determination of the core issues by the group, Midsouth will begin development of a draft curriculum and return the draft to the group and Executive Staff for review within six weeks. Upon final review and approval, Midsouth will begin implementation of the training as outlined in their contracted performance indicators.

Financial Reimbursement for Training Attendance

Employees and foster parents approved to attend training events and who require reimbursement shall submit their Travel Reimbursement (TR-1) through their supervisory chain. All DFA/DCFS fiscal policy and guidelines must be adhered to in order to receive reimbursement. The DCFS Professional Development Unit will monitor and process valid reimbursement claims. Certificates or other documentation of attendance must be submitted with CFS-360 forms (for elective training sessions) to receive reimbursement. **If training certificates are not distributed at an eligible training event, the supervisor may complete and submit a CFS-476 attesting to the participant's attendance.**

Funding Sources

Funding sources for training include federal funding (i.e., Title IV-E Foster Care, Title IV-E Adoption, Title IV-B part 1 and part 2, and TANF), state general revenues sources and grant funding, when available. (includes CAPTA although this is specifically used for training providers in the specific area of service delivery that they are providing). The IV-E Chafee ILP funding is used for the Annual Teen Conference training workshops.

Cost Allocation Methodology

DCFS uses the approved allocations process approved by the Federal and State plan. Listed below are the cost centers used in the cost allocation method.

- DCFS PRE-SERVICE TRAINING-FIELD 250-04-07-02-G1:
This cost center includes new worker training for DCFS field staff.
- DCFS IN-SERVICE TRAINING-FIELD 250-04-07-04-G1:
This cost center includes in-service training (excludes pre-service) for DCFS field staff.
- DCFS FOSTER/ADOPTIVE PARENTS 250-04-07-07 G1:
This cost center is used for Character 10 contracts and purchase orders to pay for training of foster/adoptive parents and other related training costs.
- DCFS EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENT 250-04-07-08-G1:
This cost center is for salary and fringe for DCFS staff that are on full-time educational leave.
- DCFS TRAINING 250-04-07-15-G1:
This cost center includes training for staff which is not covered by DCFS pre-service-field or DCFS in-service training-field.

- **DCFS PRE-SERVICE TRAINING-SUPERVISION 250-04-07-16-G1:**
This cost center is used for new supervisor/manager training (field or central office.)
- **DCFS IN-SERVICE TRAINING-SUPERVISION 250-04-07-17-G1:**
This cost center is used for in-service training (excludes pre-service) for DCFS field and central office supervisors and managers.
- **DCFS CONTRACTING 250-04-07-18-G1:**
This cost center is for Character 10 contracts and purchase orders to pay for trainers for staff and/or foster/adoptive parents.

Total Estimated Cost of DCFS Training Contracts

The estimated total expenditure for IV-E training is \$7,853.992.00 for the 2007-2008 SFY fiscal year (UALR \$4,926,883.00 and UAF \$2,927,109.00)

Compensation Training: \$4,786,405.00 (UALR \$2,491,021.00 and UAF \$2,295,384.00)

Reimbursable Training: \$2,057,828.00 (UALR \$1,951,624.00 and UAF \$106,204.00)

Administrative Cost: \$986,510

This methodology includes training for all DCFS staff and includes foster parents and adoptive parents (resources).

Division of Children and Family Services Training Goals

1. DCFS will review and determine changes/enhancements to ensure the effectiveness and consistency of application of current guidelines and publish a standardized method for conducting the panel process within DCFS.

Update:

Goal 1 – The task was to develop a standardized method for conducting the Panel process in the field for FSW Trainees. A workgroup recommended and subsequent approval was

received on standardized questions to be used in FSWT-FSW and FSW-FSW Specialist Panel Reviews. These standardized questions have been provided to the field at the direction of the Assistant Director for Community Services. Completion of this part of goal was completed in May 2008, but the review and development of the process for scheduling and use of the questions is incomplete and still being reviewed by DCFS.

2. DCFS will review current practice within the Division and develop and publish a standardized volunteer orientation packet for use in all Areas.

Update

Goal 2 – DCFS will remove Goal #2 and written reference in the Training Plan to training of volunteers. DCFS does not have a formal volunteer orientation program or policy and if offices obtain services from volunteers, they will be provided volunteer training through the Division of Volunteerism as guided by DHS Policy 1027.

3. The Division will explore the possibility of developing job task competency clusters to better identify training needs of Central Office staff.

Update:

Goal 3-Not accomplished at this time: DCFS PDU needs to establish a committee to develop job task competency cluster to identify training needs of Central office staff. The Organizational Assessment Report and surveys conducted with all Central Office staff will be used to develop the job task competency clusters needed to be developed to have specific training opportunities for Central Office staff.

4. The Division will review various media that may be used in independent training events such as DVDs, CDs or Internet courses to expand the list of training resources used by the foster parents.

Update:

Goal 4 – This goal addressed the availability of various video or online media and allowance for training credit to be recorded for DCFS foster parents. A draft version of DCFS Publication has included the following draft text: *“No more than 5 hours of videos, books, or online courses or TV programs for each foster parent will be accepted per year and must have prior approval by the Area Manager or their designee.”* All Partnership Universities maintain video and printed resources libraries that are available to all DCFS foster parents. Online courses are available through some internet vendors. This goal has been achieved.

5. DCFS will review the possibility of allowing foster parents with the skills to offer life skills training for foster children in their home.

Update:

Goal 5 – This goal addressed allowing DCFS foster parents with the skills to offer life skills training for foster children in their home. This issue is not addressed in the state Training

Plan and is a behavior already expected of DCFS foster parents. We will remove this goal from our plan as it will be addressed in the IL strategic plan.

6. The agency will review and evaluate the process and criteria for the ITNA, to determine effectiveness of application in identification of actual training needs and impact on attendance in needed training activities. The ITNA process will also be reviewed to determine whether it will fit an intranet application so that the forms and computation could be completed online.

Update:

Goal 6 – This goal addressed the validity of using ITNAs to determine training needs for field staff. DCFS field supervisors currently submit manually-completed ITNA surveys to Midsouth for compilation and reporting to DCFS PDU, Area Managers and DCFS Executive Staff. Identified training topics are considered mandatory for field staff if they are assigned such status by their supervisor as critical to the effectiveness of the employee and/or to complete the employee’s annual training hour requirement. It has been determined that this is an effective method of identifying training needed by field staff based on the existing approved competencies for FSW staff. Work remaining on this goal is to develop online ITNA forms and reporting which should increase the number of submissions to UALR Midsouth. Midsouth staff are currently working on development of online ITNA reports for use by field staff. When this is accomplished, this task will be complete.

7. DCFS will review the process of approval of pre-service training successfully completed by foster parents prior to entering service within Arkansas. If this process is approved, foster parents from states providing pre-service training acceptable to DCFS will be allowed to be reviewed for approval upon entry into the state. A method of providing information to these foster parents concerning legislation and mandates impacting foster parenting in Arkansas must be determined.

Update:

Goal 7 – This goal addressed evaluation of training provided to foster parents entering service within Arkansas. A process for this review has been identified and is now within the Training Plan. If no deficiencies are noted, best practice, legal issues or policy information, the training will be accepted. If deficiencies are noted, recommended training will be carried out through DCFS staff or Midsouth Training Academy staff. This goal is achieved.

8. With the recent development of entry and retrieval ability of worker training attendance records in CHRIS, DCFS will have need to determine the appropriate format for reports to be constructed by the CHRIS staff. DCFS Executive Staff and Area Managers will be contacted for input in the development of the needed information to be viewed multiple report formats needed to monitor employee training records.

Update:

Goal 8 – This goal addressed the need to develop report formats for training data retrieval from CHRIS. CHRIS Staff have informed DCFS that the ability to develop online reporting of training attendance will be through the development of a DHS Data Warehouse. The expected date for the development of the DHS Data Warehouse is in 2010. This goal will be removed from this goal list and will be a goal for the next 5 Year plan developed.

9. DCFS will evaluate the need to require supervisory approval of the CFS-360 and transmittal of forms for all elective training events for program staff, up through and including the Assistant Director for Community Services. Some training events provided by Midsouth or the UAF Partnership only need approval up to the level of Area Manager.

Update:

Goal 9 - A question was raised involving the level of supervisory approval of the CFS-360 form needed within DCFS for participants applying to attend elective training events provided through UAF or Midsouth, and if the approval could be made by the Area Manager and not have to travel to the Director of Community Services for the final approval. The Assistant Director of Community Services has determined that all training applications (CFS-360) for training events provided through the DCFS University Partnership (UALR and UAF) may be approved at the Area Manager level. This goal has been achieved.

10. The Division will explore the development of a multi-tiered supervisor-training program to provide advanced training for supervisors. DCFS will also determine attendance criteria to allow non-supervisor staff to attend the Leadership portion of the DCFS Leadership/Supervisor Training event. DCFS Executive Staff approved the recommendations of the Supervisor Training Curriculum Review Group which added supervisor tier training events to the established curriculum.

Update:

Goal 10 – This task addressed the development of tiered training to address training needs of field supervisors. The committee given this task submitted their recommendations for updating the current DCFS Supervisor training with recommendations for first, second and third year training topics. All these recommendations were approved in February of 2008 by DCFS Executive Staff. Completion of this task involved a cooperative effort between DCFS supervisory staff, both field and Central Office, UALR Midsouth, and the UAF University Partnership. Another issue listed under this goal related to providing opportunity for non-supervisory staff to attend the Leadership curriculum attached to the DCFS Leadership/Supervisor Training course. This opportunity was approved by the DCFS Staff and the selection method for participants has been approved. This goal has been achieved.

11. DCFS is evaluating the possibility of developing a Social Service Aid Educational Assistance program to allow selected SSA staff to return to school at the beginning of their junior year for the purpose of obtaining a BSW or other degree acceptable to DHHS.

Update:

Goal 11 – This goal assesses the need and if feasible, develop a plan to provide a DCFS Social Service Aid Educational Assistance Program to allow Social Service Aids to obtain a BSW or other acceptable degree. A policy has been developed concerning this program, and is currently in the final stages of comment and approval. This will be a part time program with an initial cohort of three participants. This goal has been reviewed by the DCFS Executive Staff and determined to be unattainable at this time and will be removed from the goal list.

Additional Information/Status

DCFS provided training to all field staff connected with foster and adoptions during the week of May 12-16, 2008, concerning “DCFS Adoptions Policy and Forms.” Included in the targeted training group were Central Office staff, CASA staff and Ad Litem participants.

The Foster Care IVE Penetration Rate was updated in the Training Plan to the correct rate of **70.09 %**.

Through a cooperative effort between DCFS Central Office Adoptions Staff and UALR Midsouth, *Spaulding for Children Adoption Curriculum* has been purchased by UALR Midsouth for training of Adoptions Coordinators and Adoptions Supervisors. At this time, two of the six days of training have been provided to DCFS by Midsouth.

The Adoptions Orientation training curriculum is being reviewed by DCFS Adoptions staff and UALR Midsouth for online presentation due to the low turnover number of Adoption staff.

4. Tribal Consultation

Status for 2008

The last SFY reported 12 children entering foster care as American Indian/Native American/Alaskan Native. To ensure that DCFS is in compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act, Policy Procedure VI-AI directs the Family Service Worker to contact the Office of Chief Counsel immediately if there is any indication that the child is a member of an Indian tribe.

The five major components of ICWA that the Arkansas Plan addresses:

Identification of Indian children by the State Child Welfare Agency

Arkansas DCFS Field staff are required to ask questions to determine if a client is of Native American heritage when completing the CFS-6009 (Family Strengths and Needs Assessment). Workers are required to complete client information screens in CHRIS that identify the ethnicity of a child and family which includes a pick-list to specify an individual Indian tribe. The screen that is completed in CHRIS and the pick-list that identifies all recognized tribes in the U.S. is attached for your review.

In the new Family Strengths and Needs Assessment tool draft that was developed as part of the PIP (Action Step 1.2) there is a "Cultural Factors Section" which requires workers to describe any pertinent cultural influences or traditions of the household members. Do any household members speak a foreign language and need an interpreter? Is there a cultural practice that might appear to be abuse. Does the culture endorse physical punishment?

Does any household member claim Native American heritage (Yes or No)? If yes, what is the tribal affiliation and is the person on the tribal rolls? Could the children in this family fall under the scope of the Indian Child Welfare Act?

Notification of Indian parents and Tribes of State proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene

OCC attorneys have been trained on numerous occasions on ICWA. All new OCC attorneys are trained on ICWA prior to taking over a dependency neglect caseload. OCC attorneys provide notification to Indian parents and tribes of proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene. An ICWA checklist has been developed and distributed to the OCC attorneys in May of 2006 and to other attorney and judges at the Child and Law Conference in 2006.

OCC attorneys are initiating legal training May 2008 with the field staff and ICWA information is included.

Special placement preferences for Indian children

OCC has assisted CFS when the tribe identifies an Indian foster home in ensuring that Indian children are placed in accordance with the preferences outlined in ICWA. The Arkansas Juvenile Judges have also been trained on ICWA and the judges know that the agency must make active efforts to prevent removal of Indian children from their homes. The Administrative Office of the Courts provided all of the OCC Attorneys and Juvenile Judges with a copy of the

Indian Child Welfare Act Checklists from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Active efforts to prevent the breakup of the Indian family

DCFS Staff with the assistance of the Arkansas Juvenile Judges and OCC make active efforts to prevent the removal of Indian children from their homes. There must be clear documentation during court hearings of the to prevent the removal of a child be the court grants custody to the Division. Each Arkansas Juvenile Judge uses the Indian Child Welfare Act Checklist in making decisions concerning cases where the child is of Native American heritage.

Use of Tribal courts in child welfare matters; Tribal right to intervene in State proceedings or transfer proceedings to the jurisdiction of the Tribe.

DCFS staff with assistance from OCC work with Tribal courts in child welfare matters when requested by the Tribal courts. Once a Tribal organization is notified of a Native American child's involvement in the child welfare system, field staff along with OCC work with the Tribal organizations, courts or appropriate representatives to implement services that are the best interest of the child and that are recommended by the Tribal courts. If the Tribe takes jurisdiction of the case DCFS staff work with the Tribal courts to facilitate the transfer of the case and the child.

Native American children age 14 or older are eligible for Chafee services just as any youth in foster care in Arkansas would be. Any youth assigned to an IL Coordinator's workload is provided an assessment and Chafee services in accordance with their case plan. These youth are neither discriminated against nor provided preferential treatment with regard to IL/Chafee/ETV services.

5. Consultations with Physicians or Appropriate Medical Professionals

The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) policy requires that all necessary medical services be provided to children receiving out-of-home placement services. DCFS is dedicated to ensuring that all foster children receive a full range of health care services, including mental health services. An initial health screen is completed on each child within 24 hours, if the reason for removal is an allegation of severe child maltreatment or evidence of serious injury/illness. All other children receive the screening within 72 hours of removal from the home. School aged children in need of mental health services are referred to a Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) within (5) five days of entry into foster care. Within sixty days (60) from the removal of the home, a comprehensive health assessment is completed on each child. DCFS ensures that all health and mental health services are provided periodically and conducted by qualified providers.

DCFS works with Primary Care Physicians, University of Arkansas Medical Sciences (UAMS) Project for Adolescent and Child Evaluations (PACE) Project and area mental health agencies in meeting the health and well being of foster children. In addition, DCFS has increased the health staff around the state and re-established the quarterly training for Health Service Workers. DCFS works with the medical profession, to ensure that all foster children's medical and mental health needs are met: 1) collects sufficient history and medical data from appropriate sources to assess the child and formulate the problem, 2) ensures that a mental health examination and physical examination is conducted as necessary, 3) ensures that a diagnosis is established, and 4) initiates a treatment plan. Children are referred to the Child and Adolescence Service System Program (CASSP), when they require intensive mental health services and inter-agency involvement on service plans. Compliance with the 24-hour & 72-hour health screenings and the comprehensive health screen has improved dramatically in several DCFS areas.

6. Disaster Planning

Strategic Plan for Arkansas Disaster Planning for the Division of Children and Family Services: Timeline for completion is December 2008

Each of the following sections will be addressed in the strategic plan and action steps to achievement by December 2008. There is some work taking place at this time.

Ensure that each County has an Action Plan for Natural Disasters and/or Emergencies:

- Each County Supervisor will coordinate with the County Administrator and ensure a plan for locating foster parents/foster children and ensuring their safety is in place.
- Each County will establish a critical staff list with alternates named and responsibilities listed
- Each County will provide a written plan to Central Office Planning Unit
- Training will be developed and provided on a yearly basis in each area
- Each County will coordinate with County Administrators to have emergency kits and to determine that each kit should have included

By March 2009

Status: A primary coordinator and back up has been identified within the division for disaster planning. Two training session have been conducted departmentally to begin to develop a disaster plan for the Division. The coordinators have met periodically to discuss protocols and planning for the division disaster plan. A committee has been established to work on development. Information has been shared every 6 months with Area Managers about the need for disaster plan and updating the department progress. Next steps are to begin coordinating meetings with field supervisors and County Administrators to achieve this task. Due by March 2009.

Establish a Protocol for Contacts and Centralized Information:

- Each employee will complete an Emergency Contact form to ensure the Agency has a way to follow up and ensure the safety and status of employee.
- Each DCFS foster parent will complete an Emergency Contact form to ensure the Agency has a way to follow up and ensure the safety and status of the employee.
- Coordinate with State Management System so that employees, foster parents, adoptive parents, have a way to access support in an emergency and keep agency staff informed.
- Each County will establish a “check in” protocol in case of Emergency

By March 2009

Status: See above status information. Research has been conducted on other states tools in planning for disaster and plans are underway to have foster parents complete the emergency contact form at approval. Need to develop the implementation plan. The Department has an Emergency Contact web page that all employees and new employees are to complete. The coordinators for the division monitor and follow up to ensure that staff are completing.

Update Current Contingency Plan for Access to Records as needed:

- Executive staff will have access to the contingency plan for access to records
- CFO Cecile Blucker will maintain the original copy and update as needed

Status: This contingency plan has been updated and is on file.

Establish a Plan to Continue Case Management:

- The division will establish a checklist for continued case management in the field
- Each Area will have a plan for continuing to respond to critical child maltreatment reports and priority cases with each county

By March 2009

Status: No Progress

Establish a Plan of Support from Central Office and/or County Offices to Central Office:

- Area managers will coordinate and establish a plan of support for counties that border other areas
- A plan will be developed on a statewide basis to respond to the physical and emotional needs of staff in ensuring their own family well being is in place
- The division will establish a de-briefing protocol to review outcomes and needed changes on plans

By March 2009

Status: No Progress

Establish a Plan to manage Volunteers:

- Each Area Manager/Supervisor needs to coordinate with County Administrator and ensure there are plans to identify volunteers who can assist
- Establish a list of tasks/activities that could be handled by volunteers
- Develop time sheets/assignment sheets/ and protocol
- Provide training to volunteers on a yearly basis

By March 2009

Status: No Progress

Other information:

DHHS Policy 1017.4.0

After hours Emergency and Disaster Plan

SFY07 Business Continuity and Contingency Plan

AdoptUSKIDS

7. Worker Visits

Arkansas has struggled with meeting the standard for worker visits with foster children for a variety of issues/barriers including lack of staff; time management; and training.

DCFS has assessed the barrier and has determined that the following task took away time to conduct and document meaningful worker visits: placement issues with hard to place youth; lack of clerical support; lack of adequate supervisory oversight; lack of staff; and to some extent lack of experience/skill.

We understand from the findings of the Child and Family Services reviews show evidence that one of the most important ways to promote positive outcomes for children and their families is to ensure the quality and frequency of caseworker's visits with the children and families in the agency's care.

We understand that for caseworker visits to be successful, the focus should shift from examining only the performance of families (for example, did the parent attend substance abuse treatment) to assessing the performance of the agency and caseworker, (for example, did the agency ensure that the treatment matched the needs, age, and gender of the client and was available at a time and location appropriate to their schedule) and how well the family is functioning relative to the support and services provided by the agency.

We also understand that for caseworker visits to be successful, the caseworker must have the skills to engage the family and develop a relationship that supports and motivates the family to make the changes necessary to be successful with achieving their case plan goal and have healthy and nurturing family relationships.

This shift promotes caseworker engagement in continuous quality improvement. The goals of the visits with a family are caseworker goals and goals related to the family's progress.

The Director of Community Services has identified seven priorities for improvement in the field over the next few years. Worker visits is one of these priorities.

DCFS will develop or enhance resources and change protocols and practices to assist in ensuring worker visits occur by implementing the following strategies:

Retention: In Process through Committee work:

- Develop retention incentives for staff and/or areas that are successful in meeting the standard for worker visits with children in a meaningful way that impacts in a positive way the outcomes of children and families

Recruitment: In Process through Committee work:

- Improving our recruitment efforts by attending university job fairs; partnering with the Department's Human Resource Office; and utilizing interns as well as stipends to increase hiring and fill job vacancies

Training: In development through PIP model of Practice workgroup; some informal meetings have already taken place

- Ensure staff receive training on Best Practice in worker visits with children and quality documentation of visits that occur as well as training on engagement of youth and families; time management; and conducting supervisory case reviews; to include an assessment of current curriculum on worker visits with families to ensure that skills are taught on how to engage the family and develop a relationship with the family that supports and motivates them to change.

Supervisory Review Tool: Ongoing process:

- Changes have been made on the Supervisory review tool to include a review and discussion of the worker visit with child

Centralized Placement Unit: In Process

- Developing a centralized placement unit to assist with clinical assessment and development of appropriate resources for the placement of hard to place youth. This may include Master level staff to assist with youth who are diagnosed with developmental disabilities, sex offenders, and youth that meet criteria for therapeutic. By developing and implementing this unit and expanding resources, this outcome we hope to see if less time on locating placement for children and more time spent in direct services which include worker visits with youth.

Resource Workers: In Process through Foster Adopt recruitment committee

- Specialized staff known as Resource staff who are responsible for recruitment, monitoring of foster homes, and retention to increase the number of placement options for children entering foster care and the intended outcome is less time on locating placement and more time on direct services including worker visits with youth

Data: In Process through committee that reviews and tracks CHRIS enhancements

- CHRIS/SACWIS enhancement to better monitor and track worker visit with child by worker

Other:

- Pursue the possibility of additional clerical support and transportation services to allow case worker to spend more time in direct services including worker visits

This last year, worker visit dollars supported the recruitment and retention of DCFS staff and equipment purchases to assist in organizational and time management outcomes.

Other activities included meeting in each Area at the monthly Area Managers meeting and reviewing the mandate for work visits, the policy, how outcomes improve based on contact with the family, and sharing best practice techniques. This training/sharing of information was also provided at one of the quarterly supervisors meeting that DCFS host in central office. The planning unit has developed a Best Practice in Worker Visits pamphlet that is in draft.

Strategic Plan for Work Visits:

Goal: Children placed in foster care have a meaningful face to face visit with their worker on a monthly basis.

Baseline: June 2008 Worker visits are at 32 %

Measurement Tool: CHRIS COR report

Outcomes:

By November 30, 2008 for FFY 2008

Targeted percentage benchmark: 32%

By October 2009

**10% increase in completed worker visits with children in foster care
DCFS goal is 70%**

By October 2010

**10% increase in completed worker visits with children in foster care
DCFS goal is 80%**

By October 2011

**10% increase in completed worker visits with children in foster care
DCFS goal is 90%**

Objective 1: Areas will establish Action Plans to ensure monthly face to face visits are held with children in their placement.

Tasks 1: Each area will assess the barriers for monthly visits with foster children in their placement. Due by: October 30, 2008

Task 2: Each area will develop a written action plan to address the barriers and plan for conducting these visits each month. Due by November, 30, 2008

Task 3: Central Office staff will provide technical assistance as needed in developing and implementing this plan and/or providing support to achieve monthly visits- Ongoing through 2011

Objective 2: Field staff will have training opportunities to improve skills in preparing, conducting, and documenting monthly visits with children in foster care.

Task 1: Planning Unit will develop “best practice notes” for conducting and documenting monthly visits with children in foster care. Due by: August 30, 2008

Task 2: Planning Unit will distribute and post on CHRIS NET information regarding the impact of monthly worker visits with positive outcomes. Due by: September 30, 2008

Task 3: PDU will review the in service training available and determine if updated information is needed and coordinate a schedule of in-service training for preparing, conducting, and documenting worker visits. Due by: December 30, 2008

Task 4: PDU will coordinate with MidSouth and IV-E Partners to develop skill based workshops in conducting meaningful worker visits with children in foster care. Due by: October 30, 2008

Task 5: PDU will coordinate with MidSouth and IV-E partners to review the current time management training and ensure that information and

techniques are included to have time for worker visits with children in foster care.

Objective 3: DCFS will monitor the improvements of worker visits with children in foster

Task 1. QA unit will continue to conduct annual reviews and document the improvement or barriers in conducting worker visits with children in foster care. Due by: Ongoing

Task 2: QA staff will share outcome information with Community Services
Due by: Ongoing

Task 3: Area Managers will use this information to review action plan and adjust as needed. Due by: Ongoing

Task 4: Area Managers/Supervisors will review monthly report indicting compliance of field with worker visits with children in foster care located in CHRIS by Area/County. Due by: Ongoing

Plan for Collecting Data and Reporting:

The Division submitted the below information last year with one exception: in the written logic, we stated that we excluded runaways, but in the data pull that was submitted, runaways were not excluded. The only change is in the written logic: we have deleted “exclude runaways”.

- **Provide FY 2007 data on caseworker visits including the % of children in foster care under the responsibility of the state who were visited on a monthly basis by the caseworker handling the case of the child, and the % of the visits that occurred in the residence of the child (DO NOT HAVE)**
- **Requirement:** Describe the procedure the State has developed to track and report caseworker visit data to HHS; and, describe what information collection method/process will be used to arrive at reported percentages:
 - **Data:**
 - **Aggregate Number of Children Served in Foster Care** – to identify the children reported in 2007A (and what’s currently being captured in B) who were in care during a full month;
 - **Example – 3000 children**
 - **Number of Children Visited Each and Every Calendar Month** – using the above children (**deleted runaways**) we will review their Contact screen (when the client is identified as Participant) to capture the ‘visit’ by selecting the appropriate Type/Location:
 - Type/Location pick list:
 - Face to Face (Court)
 - Face to Face (Day Care)
 - Face to Face (DHS Office)

- Face to Face (Home)
- Face to Face (Hospital)
- Face to Face (Observed, Too Young)
- Face to Face (Other)
- Face to Face (Placement Provider)
- Face to Face (School)
- **Example** – from the 3000 children, only **1000 children** had a visit each and every month
- **Total Number of Visit Months** – using the above children who received a visit each and every month, we would multiply the number of children by the number of monthly visits (only one visit per month) to get the total;
 - **Example** – from the above 1000 children, there were a total of **8250 visit months** :
 - 500 children who had a visit each and every month were in care 12 months = 6000
 - 250 children who had a visit each and every month were in care 6 months = 1500
 - 250 children who had a visit each and every month were in care 3 months = 750
- **Total Number of Placement Visit Months** – using the 8250 visit months, pull only those that have Face to Face (Placement Provider) or Face to Face (Home) on children placed in Trial Home Visit;
 - **Example** – from the 8250 visit months, **6120 visits** occurred in the child's residence.
- **Calculations:**
 - **Percentage of Children in Foster Care who were visited during each and every calendar month** – dividing the number of children visited by the number of children served in foster care:
 - **Example – 33%:**
 - 1000 children who had a visit each and every month divided by 3000 children
 - **Percentage of Visits occurred in the residence of the child** – dividing the number of visit months that occurred in the child residences by the total number of visit months:
 - **Example – 74%:**
 - 6120 child's residence monthly visits divided by 8250 total visit months

DCFS is aware that beginning in FY 2008, states cannot use more than the amount of non-federal funds it spent in FY 2005 on foster care maintenance as match for the title IV-B subpart 1 program.

DCFS is aware that Arkansas must submit FY 2007 baseline data regarding current caseworker visitation, set targets for improvement, and meet the goal of 90% are visited by their caseworker on a monthly basis and the majority of visits occur in the child's residence by October 1, 2011; FY 2008, title IV-B, subpart 1 funds will not be awarded until such time as the baseline data is

submitted to ACF. If a state fails to achieve its progress goals, a reduced amount of federal funds will be awarded; continuation of subpart 2 funding for caseworker visits.

CAPTA STATE GRANT

Accomplishments

Mid-South Training Academy certified forty-six DCFS staff on the Active Parenting curriculum during the reporting period. Instruction is presented by certified staff during in-home visits and in group sessions. Active Parenting programs combine the use of videos, activities and discussion to help parents raise responsible children. All participants are given a pre-test and post-test to measure mastery. A total of eight hundred and ten (810) parents received parenting education. DCFS has convened a Parenting Education Workgroup comprised of DCFS staff and community stakeholders. The workgroup will develop strategies, and explore best practices utilized by other states. Parenting Education services are offered statewide.

Goal: DCFS will request quarterly progress reports to measure parent's progress and outcomes. Follow-up and outcomes will be documented in the case plan. We will offer additional parenting programs and supplemental materials to address parents' struggle with substance abuse, school and homework problems, basic home maker skills, management and budgeting and family conflict, including domestic violence.

Family Resource Centers services are community based and family focused directed toward prevention, intervention and alleviation of community identified problems. Services include, but are not limited to, family support, employment services, and community outreach services. Child Abuse and Neglect materials were distributed to all Family Resource Centers to aid in community awareness campaigns.

Goal: The Family Resource Centers will continue to provide support and resources for families; facilitate interactions between and among families; promote job training skills; teach families to access community resources. DCFS will track the activities and outcomes of families of the Family Resource Center. DCFS will provide annual training to Family Resource Center staff. Child abuse prevention materials and promotional items will be provided to the Centers to raise the community's knowledge of the need to protect children.

Human Service Workers in the Schools is a partnership between DCFS and school districts across the state. Human Services Workers work collaboratively with DCFS to deliver services meeting the Division's philosophy of protecting and preserving children. Human Service workers in the Schools provided services including, but not limited to, crisis intervention,

family/student counseling, home visits, transportation, parent training activities and supportive service referrals.

Child abuse prevention materials and promotional items were distributed to Human Service Workers in the Schools in an effort to promote child abuse and neglect prevention the schools across the state.

Goal: Support the goal of school-linked programs to improve student's educational achievement. Ensure the health and social needs of students are met. Continue to provide school based social services, educational programs and child abuse prevention.

Two (2) Fatherhood Programs provided resources and services to fathers to help them develop meaningful relationships with their children, obtain employment, and contribute to the support of their families. Fathers receive an assessment and service plans are developed to identify strengths and weaknesses. Fatherhood programs continue to develop partnerships with DCFS workers. Family Service Workers provide referrals of Fathers, especially those fathers whose children are in foster care. Services offered include, but are not limited to education, job training, and support groups. Parenting programs teach fathers how to be responsible fathers in the support of their children, including financial support. The Fatherhood program provided services to a total of ninety-seven (97) fathers and one hundred and thirty two (132) children. Twenty-seven (27) fathers received employment assistance, twenty eight (28) fathers completed the requirements for a GED, giving them the capacity to contribute financially to the support of their children and strengthening father/family bonds. Twenty-one (21) children in foster care were reunited with their children.

All Fatherhood Initiative providers received training on child abuse and neglect and participate in an annual training.

The Fatherhood Initiative services are provided statewide.

Goal: To expand on the successes of the existing Fatherhood Initiatives to include additional sites in two (2) areas of the state. We will establish coalitions with the existing Fatherhood Programs to build organizational capacity to foster program sustainability.

DCFS distributed **Child Abuse Prevention** materials, including ten thousand (10,000) telephone magnets, ten thousand (10,000) two sided book markers, two thousand (2,000) key chains, seven thousand (7,000) pens, ten thousand (10,000) blue ribbon lapels, two thousand (2,000) lapels, seven thousand (7,000) pencils, twenty five hundred (2,500) banks. Throughout the year, DCFS receives requests for child abuse materials from Family Resource Centers, Human Service Workers in the Schools, Arkansas State Police, Field Staff, community agencies, schools and medical facilities and others. County offices held community awareness events with members of the community attending the various functions. Requests for child abuse material from the community are on-going.

DCFS, along with various partner agencies flew the Children's Memorial Flag on April 25, 2008. The press conference was well attended. Local television stations reported on the event.

Arkansas Interpreter services provide DCFS with Spanish and other language interpretation, including telephone interpreting and translation and transcription of written materials from Spanish to English and vice versa. Medical and legal terminology services were provided. Interpretation and telephone services are provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Arkansas Interpreter services collaborate with the Administrative Offices of the Court. This service also assists workers in the translation of documents. Arkansas Interpreter services are provided statewide.

DCFS will continue to purchase the services of Arkansas Interpreter services. There are no planned changes to the program as the service provides support to the families who are not proficient in English. The services provide effective communication with families. DCFS will continue to provide interpreter services for all languages to county office staff and families who are not proficient in English. The services are available statewide.

Goal: DCFS will maintain a contract with Arkansas Interpreter Services statewide for all county office staff to assist families who are not proficient in English. We will continue to offer interpreter services in at least twenty (20) languages and will expand the services to meet the needs of the clients in Arkansas.

DCFS maintains an agreement with the **Arkansas Chapter of Pediatrics** for the availability of a Physician to assist in responding to “Baby Doe” reports. The Division has a policy that outlines procedures to be taken in the event a “Baby Doe” report comes is received. DCFS did not receive any “Baby Doe” reports during the reporting period. “Baby Doe” services are provided statewide.

Goal: DCFS will continue our agreement with the Arkansas Chapter of Pediatrics to assist staff in assessing these reports and will respond in accordance with CAPTA requirements. There are no planned changes to the program.

The Family Treatment Program provides treatment to parents and caregivers of sexually abused children. Participants receive an assessment, a diagnostic interview, a psychiatric review and individual and/or group psychotherapy. Forty-nine (49) family members received the services during the reporting period. The Family Treatment Program services are provided statewide.

Goal: DCFS will continue to provide Family Treatment Services. There are no planned changes to the program.

The Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence provided Child Abuse and Neglect training to professionals, including social workers, psychologists, schools, child care centers, and the community. DCFS receives requests for child abuse and neglect training routinely throughout the year. During the reporting period, forty (40) training sessions were conducted and a total of one thousand seventy (1,970) participants were trained. The Child Abuse and Neglect training is provided statewide. There are no planned changes to the program.

Goal: DCFS will work with the Child Abuse Committee to develop partnerships with representatives from community agencies, schools and early childhood programs.

Goal: The Division of Children and Family Services will continue to improve the skills of individuals working with families and children. DCFS will continue to raise the qualification requirements of our purchased service providers, and to strengthen the performance indicators to provide more accountability. DCFS will continue to mandate continuing education for our contracted providers and staff. Our clients receive services from licensed and or certified providers.

Citizen Review Panel Annual Report State Response- 2008

The purpose of the Citizen Review Panel is to meet the requirements of the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) grant. The 1996 amendment to CAPTA requires states to develop and establish Citizen Review Panels in order to evaluate Child Protective Services.

CAPTA funds are used to support the required Citizen Review Panel. DCFS administers three (3) Citizen Review Panels in Arkansas and we have requested the addition of seven (7) new Citizen Review Panels in the 2009 budget.

Citizen Review Panel continue to review policy, procedures and practices of the State. The Panels meet quarterly as well as monthly as needed. The Panel convene more frequently than the required quarterly schedule to review case records, including deaths and near deaths. Monthly reports are submitted including recommendations for improvements to the child welfare system. Citizen Review Panel work collaboratively with the county offices and meets with the staff on a routine basis to discuss case reviews, concerns and other issues to improve the child welfare delivery system.

The Citizen Review Coordinator in Carroll County serves as the Chairman of the Child Abuse Committee and is a Commissioner on the Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse Rape and Domestic Violence.

During the reporting period, the Citizen Review Panel continued efforts to improve the State's response to children in need of protective services. The Panel held thirty seven (37) formal meetings, resulting in the review of more than twenty (20) cases, including two (2) deaths.

The Citizen Review Panel in Jefferson County reports the following areas of strength: case workers providing transportation to drug treatment programs; services provided are based on needs assessment and case plans; supervisory tools are utilized in reviewing case files; foster parent local recruitment is more active; more volunteers reaching out to faith based organizations. Recommendations include but are not limited to: Increased involvement of prosecutors during priority one investigations and additional transportation aides are identified as a need for the county. The Coordinator has agreed to work with the prosecutors on investigations. (See attached state response)

The Panel in Ouachita has expressed concerns with adults sleeping with their children. DCFS will purchase a billboard and related brochures on the subject to bring awareness to community of the danger of this practice. Recommendations include but are not limited to: The shortage of foster homes; lack of in-patient facilities for juvenile sex offender treatment; lack of mental health documentation in case plans; addressing risk factors such as domestic violence and substance abuse in families. (See attached state response)

The Citizen Review Panel in Carroll County indicated areas of strength of DCFS to include improved collaborations with law enforcement; a concerted effort by DCFS to make timely foster care placements; improved communications with the local county office. Recommendations include but are not limited to: Additional training for local coroners and law enforcement investigators; increasing the number of foster homes; streamlining the adoption and foster care processes; connecting children and families in the system to prior reports; tracking clients from state to state; child fatality training.

Some of the concerns raised in all three of the 2008 annual reports were related to the staff retention. In response to the Children and Family Services Reviews (CFSR), DCFS has assembled a Staff Retention workgroup to review and develop goals and strategies to address staff retention. These concerns regarding centralizing the filing system will be forwarded to the County Supervisors as training needs for the clerical staff. (See attached state response)

DCFS recognizes the need for more foster homes in Arkansas. A Foster Parent Recruitment plan has been completed and includes targeted recruitment toward hard to place children. A copy of the plan will be forwarded to you for review. In response to the Children and Family Services Review (CFSR), a workgroup is working on foster home recruitment. One of the strategies is to utilize foster parents who will then be trained by the Social Service Aides. The workgroup will assess the needs in the various areas and develop a plan of action to meet the Area's needs. For more information, please visit the new foster parent website at www.fosterarkansas.org.

In response to Carroll County recommendations, DCFS will cooperate with other states if there is a nationwide initiative to track clients from state to state to state. DCFS has a system in place to track client information in CHRIS. (See attached state response).

The DCFS considers Child Fatality Reviews a very important part of child protection. The Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse and Domestic Violence is planning training in the near future and Citizen Review Panels will be an integral part of the planning as training in child fatalities for panel members is recommended. (See attached State responses).

To facilitate the review of records, DCFS provides to the Citizen Review Panels a quarterly Compliance Outcome Reports (COR) containing child maltreatment assessments, child protective services cases, foster care cases and DCFS family foster care homes. This

enables the Coordinators to obtain necessary information to conduct reviews from the automated CHRIS system in a more efficient and timely manner.

Area Selected for Improvement- Citizen Review Panels

The Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence, the Department of Human Services and the Arkansas State Police have entered into an agreement in cooperation with law enforcement agencies, prosecuting attorneys, and other appropriate agencies and individuals to implement a coordinated multidisciplinary team (MDT) approach to intervention in reports involving severe maltreatment.

The Citizen Review Panel Coordinators serve as Multi-disciplinary Team (MDT) Coordinators. The MDT model is piloted in the counties in which the Citizen Review Panels are located. The Panels will play a very important role in the success of this new initiative. Some of the responsibilities of the Panel will include: convening meetings of the MDT; ensuring agreements of confidentiality are signed by members; coordinating information on all Hotline calls that meet the protocol for review by the MDT; reviewing information on pending child maltreatment investigations; making recommendations for services on each investigation reviewed at the MDT meeting and submitting to DCFS within seven (7) days of the MDT meeting at which the investigation was discussed.

The parties to this agreement are committed to a cooperative, multidisciplinary team approach to severe child maltreatment investigations.

Update of Activities to Be Implemented

The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has requested seven (7) new Citizen Review Panels in the 2009 budget. If approved, we will have Citizen Review Panels in all ten (10) of the geographic areas of the state. We intend to issue Requests for Proposals for the services.

Criminal Background Checks

DCFS has implemented the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act that outlines procedures for conducting criminal background checks of prospective foster care and adoptive parents. DCFS policy outlines new procedures for child abuse neglect registry for prospective foster and adoptive parents as well as adult members of their household.

9. Chafee Foster Care Independent Living Services

The Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

SUMMARY UPDATE FOR FY2008

The Program

The Title IV-E Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) continued to operate in unison with the Foster Care Program during FY2007 to improve information dissemination about the CFCIP Program in the ten Children and Family Services areas in Arkansas. This was done to assist in the recruitment and training of foster parents and the recruitment of teens into the program and to provide the public with knowledge of what the program can do for foster teens. Information was shared with private facilities that house foster teens in an effort to further develop a working partnership so that a broader spectrum of basic life-skills training could be provided to teens prior to their reaching the age of emancipation. The effort was continued to search out professionals and academics that can assist the program in providing basic life-skills training to the grant program on an in-kind basis or for a reasonable cost. In order to provide a statewide curriculum so that youth moving between Service Areas can continue their life-skills training without interruption, similar resources are being sought and developed in the 10 service areas. These resources can provide real world information to the teens about short and long-term situations that will affect them now and later as well as offering advice and support as a mentor would. Information is being researched and developed concerning permanent connections for Arkansas IL youth and the best practices for providing that continuum for transitioning youth.

Categories of clients

The Division's Chafee Foster Care Independence Program provides services to youth between the ages of 14 to 21 to three (3) categories of clients:

1. Foster care youth and former foster care youth (including youth adopted at age 16 or older), IV-E eligible and non IV-E eligible, between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one (16-21) participating in high school, secondary school or an equivalent technical program.
2. Former foster care youth up to the age of twenty-one (21) are eligible for post-discharge services (After-care) if the youth was in foster care on his or her eighteenth (18th) birthday. Post-discharge services may include additional life-skills training. Also job search assistance, housing search assistance, community involvement, and board assistance may be provided, as funds are available.
3. Foster teens age 14-15 are provided appropriate life skills training and other services based on evaluations and assessments. These services have been provided for the past 9 years.

Policies of the Program

The Division of Children and Family Services continues to implement policy revisions regarding the Chafee legislation and to continually evaluate and revise existing policy to conform to changes in program goals, activities and services. **Publication (Pub) 404, the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Handbook, has been revised, edited and promulgated to include policy changes, additions and updates.**

Accomplishments

The specific accomplishments and progress made in the past fiscal year toward helping youth make the transition to self-sufficiency; helping youth receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment; helping youth prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions; providing youth personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults; and meeting each of the program purposes included training and life skills workshops in the following:

Finance/Money Management,
Vocational Planning,
Parenting, Health and Hygiene,
Personal Appearance,
Nutrition,
Housing,
Team Building,
Self-Esteem,
Legal Issues,
Job Search/Vocational Planning,
College Preparation,
Financial Aid,
Drugs and Addictions,
STD's/Sexual Awareness,
Conflict Resolution and
Community Resources

2592 youth (duplicated count because youth attended more than one of the workshops presented) and 352 staff attended these workshops. In addition, 343 foster parents attended life-skills workshops with youth to monitor and assist in the training sessions.

Life-skills workshops	266	
Youth initially assessed during the year	295	
Youth reassessed	608	
Youth 14 –15 provided CFCIP services	355	
Total number of video presentations	94	
Persons attending video presentations	732	(duplicated count)
After-care services for aged-out youth	65	
Amount recorded in CHRIS for After-care	Not Available	

Financial Assistance – After Care Services

Provided financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age.

Room and board is for rent, utilities, deposits and food for foster teens that are age 18 or older and have emancipated from care and custody of the state. Basic housekeeping items are also included in this definition as “start-up” items to insure that needed items to begin basic housekeeping are available.

- Room and board payments for eligible youth who have aged out of foster care and request assistance will be limited in policy to up to \$500 per month for a maximum of three months, consecutive or not, and start-up assistance will be limited to a maximum of up to \$500. Start-up assistance will be limited to purchase of basic furniture and housekeeping items such as towels, sheets, cooking utensils, cleaning supplies and tools and safety items. Total assistance of up to \$2000 will be allowed for start-up and room and board. After-Care services were provided to 65 aged-out youth who requested assistance and were referred in FY 2006.
- Outreach for after-care services is being provided in the search for "former foster youth" in need of "After-care Services" by continuing to inform staff, foster parents, attorneys ad-litem, Youth Advisory Board members etc. of the "After-care" benefits, policies and procedures.

Training

Information on specific training that was conducted during federal fiscal year (FY) 2007 and is ongoing in FY 2008, in support of the goals and objectives include the following:

- Individual and group training for foster parents and teen sponsors is being provided, developed further and expanded to increase the knowledge and skills of this population in dealing with foster teens and assisting with life-skills development and reinforcement. Three hundred forty-three (343) foster parents attended the various trainings and workshops. In addition, CFCIP/ETV workshops were provided for foster parents at Area and State foster parent trainings and conferences.

Independent Living Coordinators were provided additional training on court protocol, resource development, life-skills assessments, documentation of contacts and services, mentoring and long-term connections, record keeping and recruitment for and provision of ETV assistance. Independent Living Coordinators, Family Service Workers and supervisors were provided training on the policy that incorporated Chafee, ETV and After-care services regulations and procedures. That training is ongoing and will continue for new workers as they are hired and for all other Coordinators and Family Service Workers as needs are identified.

- All life-skills training continues to be available to teens (up to age 21) that have aged out of foster care. In addition, they are still eligible for one-on-one counseling and staff assistance in the areas of housing, employment, financial management and transportation. If they choose to voluntarily remain in care after age 18 and continue their educational pursuits, they are also eligible for financial assistance with tuition, fees, books and room and board expenses through foster care, CFCIP and ETV. Teens that opt to leave care at age 18 or before age 21 will remain eligible for financial assistance with start-up items and room and board on an as-requested, funds-available basis and will remain eligible for ETV assistance based on educational progress. Policy and procedure to comply with the CFCIP legislation is being revised concerning the eligibility and limitations of financial support for former foster care clients. Services are also available to adoptees that were formerly in foster care.

Life-skills training sessions are recorded as to the date, time and type of training. Sign-in sheets are kept and documentation is provided to case managers, supervisors and Central Office concerning youth attendance and participation in the life-skills sessions.

Support Services

Provided personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults by conducting the following:

- Youth Advisory Board - Youth representatives on the board are involved in the CFSR process and are becoming more involved in the agency and political processes that will assist the board in being effective as an advocacy group that will be listened to. Their focus is on understanding the system and assisting with the development of new ideas, policy and methods that will enhance services for themselves and other foster youth. The youth were successful in completing the CIP video, **“Listen To Us”** and the video is being used to train court personnel. The Board is now taking an active role in dealing with other youth issues such as tuition/fee waivers, bill of rights, medical coverage for 18-21 youth, appeal processes, mentoring of other youth, services and service delivery systems, case planning with youth involvement and satisfaction surveys.

The youth are being provided with training and indoctrination concerning their role and function as a board.

No statewide teen conference or ATTA conference was held during 2007 in Arkansas.

In federal fiscal year 2007, the total unduplicated number of youth served was 1001. This includes youth for which direct paid-for services were provided as well as youth who were provided services such as life-skills training for which no direct client cost was attached.

Trust Fund Incentive Program

A trust fund is a treasury account budget in the Arkansas Administrative Statewide Information System that provides youth with financial and other appropriate support and services designed to help them transition to adulthood. For Arkansas, the trust fund program for youth receiving independent living services or transition assistance is described as the Educational Incentive Trust Fund for Post-Secondary Students. The fund provides an incentive savings account for students pursuing post-secondary educational goals to that upon completion of the course, aging out of the CFCIP system or being unable to continue or completed the course; there will be funds available to the student. Funds will also help with start-up expenses, housing expenses and other expenses required to complete the transition into adulthood and productivity.

It is estimated that the AR-CFCIP program will expend approximately \$28,500 on 17 former foster youth through the Arkansas Trust Fund Incentive Program during FFY 2007. This will include youth who were enrolled in 4-year colleges, 2-year colleges, vocational-technical schools and trade schools and who successfully completed college semesters or courses of study in other accredited schools prior to their cases being closed or aging out of care.

The Division of Children and Family Services, with approval from Region VI office of the Administration for Children and Families, established educational incentive trust funds on June 21, 2002, for youth leaving foster care.

The incentive program is totally encumbered and there are no new funds that will be put into the program for additional youth. The actual figures of encumbrance and balance will vary over time due to updates on semesters, grades and dropouts who do or do not qualify for payments.

Youth Served FFY 2007-2008 —83 (Incentive accounts maintained or paid out)**Beginning Balance Available - \$153,487****Committed to Date - \$152,500****Current Available Funds- \$987****Expended to date--\$82,500****Projected expenditures FFY 2007/2008--\$21,800**

A description of and the agreement for funding, accumulation and disbursement of funds in this incentive account follow on the next seven (7) pages.

CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM

EDUCATIONAL INCENTIVE TRUST FUND

FOR POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

AUTHORIZATION FOR ESTABLISHMENT

Written notification was received from the Region VI office of the Administration for Children and Families on May 26, 1994 indicating the amendments to the Arkansas Chafee Foster Care Independence Program grant application establishing educational incentive trust funds for youth leaving foster care were acceptable. The notification indicated that the request had been reviewed and been found to comply with requirements provided in ACYF-PI-93-16 and that the information concerning Arkansas' Independent Living Trust Funds was permanent and would remain in effect unless it is rescinded, after notification in writing, to the Commissioner of ACYF.

SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR THE CFCIP TRUST FUND ACCOUNT

The sole source of funding for the Educational Incentive Trust Fund account will be any unencumbered, unexpended funds remaining in any Independent Living grant account on September 30 of the second year that a particular grant award covers. Independent Living grants are awarded for each Federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) and are allowed to be expended during two federal fiscal years. E.g. The grant award for the Federal fiscal year October 1, 1996 through September 30, 1997 (FFY1997) may be expended until September 30, 1998. Any funds remaining on September 30, 1998 would be transferred to the Incentive Trust Fund Account. At the point the Educational Incentive Trust Fund is depleted, the program will cease operation and close any and all associated active accounts. No further incentives will accumulate or be credited to any student's account for payment.

Any funds that remain in the Educational Incentive Trust Fund account for a period of six (6) months and are not anticipated to be paid out during that state fiscal year may be placed with the Investment Section of the State Treasurer's Office for deposit to an interest bearing Certificate of Deposit for a period of (not to exceed) three (3) months.

PURPOSE AND USE OF THE CFCIP TRUST FUND ACCOUNT

To provide an incentive savings account for students pursuing post-secondary educational goals so that upon completion of the course, aging out of the CFCIP system or being unable to continue or complete the planned course, there will be funds available to the student to utilize for additional educational expenses, graduation expenses, start-up expenses, housing expenses or other expenses required to complete the transition into adulthood and productivity.

CLIENT ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

Youth who choose to remain in foster care after graduating from high school and enroll in post-secondary educational pursuits such as college, junior college, vocational-technical school or trade school and who sign a post-secondary education participation agreement will be eligible to accrue incentive credits in a ledger account established under their name.

Eligibility will continue for as long as the student is enrolled and incentives will accrue until (1) the educational pursuit is completed (2) the student withdraws from the educational program or, (3) their 21st birthday occurs. At that time, their eligibility will cease and any funds accrued in their account will be paid to them.

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT AND CRITERIA

Youth who participate in post-secondary educational programs will only be eligible for incentive credits for as long as a signed contract following the guidelines below is in force.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

Contract

For _____

Youth Name

- The youth must be enrolled as a full time student in an accredited institution or he/she will be dismissed from foster care. Youth will apply for and keep active Federal Pell Grant and other available grants and scholarships.
- The youth will maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0.
- The youth will provide a copy of each semester's grades to the FSW. Youth will agree to sign a release for Worker to obtain information from the institute regarding youth's class schedule, grades, attendance records, and financial aid status.
- The youth will attend all scheduled classes. The youth will contact their Sponsor or CFCIP Coordinator, if they have already acquired 2 absences, for written permission to miss any additional classes.
- The youth will attend a minimum of 10 scheduled Basic Life-Skills Training workshops and/or activities annually.
- The youth will attend DCFS staffing in order to actively participate in establishing, updating, and following their case plan.
- The youth may attain and maintain a job that does not interfere with academic endeavors to assist with support.
- The youth will maintain contact with their sponsor and FSW Worker at least twice monthly totaling 4 monthly visits, unless a waiver has been approved.
- The youth will notify caseworker of any changes in school, work and/or living arrangements within two (2) days of said change.

- The youth will not partake of alcohol, drugs or substances that are not prescribed. Any positive urine analysis may result in immediate dismissal from the IL Program. Youth agrees to submit to random UA when requested.
- The youth may be dismissed from the IL Program if he/she is found guilty of any illegal activity.
- If teen exhibits inappropriate behavior that demonstrates his/her inability to work with Worker, Sponsor, and CFCIP Coordinator; he/she will be dismissed from the IL Program.
- Failure to comply with all contract statements will result in a 'Determination Staffing'.

Outline of Responsibilities:

Freshmen

- Youth will live in a foster home, with their CFCIP Sponsor or if Worker allows, in dorm housing.
- Youth must maintain and pass 15 credit hours each freshmen semester (12 credit hours of basic courses + 3 credit hours of electives).

Upper Classmen

- Youth may live in own residence if the residence is in compliance with Independent Youth's Residence Checklist (CFS – 370).
- No roommates will be allowed for upperclassmen residing in their own residence.
- Youth will comply with all rules and regulations set forth by the landlord. This includes all signed rental and lease agreements.

Sponsor

- Sponsor will attend all staffing and make sure the youth is abiding with the terms of the established case plan.
- Sponsor will assist the youth in maintaining a budget of monthly income and expenses.
- Sponsor will visit the youth twice monthly and will notify Worker of any problems detected during the visit.
- Sponsor will receive and disburse monthly board payment to youth based on the current budget plan.

Family Service Worker

- Worker will initiate an appropriate board payment for youth based on the current budget needs while the youth is in foster care.
- Worker will notify youth and Sponsor, and IL Coordinator of staffing.
- Worker will visit youth weekly, unless a waiver is approved.
- Worker will maintain monthly contacts with Sponsor (can be telephone or e-mail contacts).

- Worker will provide CFCIP Coordinator with a copy of youth's class schedule at the beginning of each semester.
- Worker will provide CFCIP Coordinator with youth's grades, attendance records and financial aid status within seven (7) days of each semester's end.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Coordinator

- Coordinator will request CFCIP funding for youth if he/she qualifies.
- Coordinator will notify FSW Supervisors, Youth and Sponsor of all workshops, trainings and activities.
- Coordinator will assist youth in finding resources to prepare him/her for independence.

Participation in the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program will end when the youth has:

- Reached 21st birthday
- Achieved independence to the extent that financial support and social services are no longer needed.
- Made a voluntary decision to no longer participate in the IL Program, therefore leaving Foster Care.

OR

- Demonstrated unwillingness or the inability to meet the requirements of the IL Program and the terms of the agreement established in the case plan.

I join in an agreement as to the specified conditions of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. I have read, understand and voluntarily agree to abide with the contract terms.

Youth's Signature
Date

Date

Sponsor's Signature

Family Service Worker

Date

CFCIP Coordinator

Date

ACCUMULATION OF INCENTIVE CREDITS:

For Four-year School Attendance:

A credit of \$500 will be posted to the student's ledger account for each full, spring or fall, semester that is completed in accordance with the student's contract/agreement concerning grade point and hours completed.

A maximum credit of \$250 will be posted to the student's ledger account for each completion of six (6) hours or more of courses during summer terms between freshman and sophomore terms, sophomore and junior terms and junior and senior terms. The total allowable incentive to be posted under this category is \$4750.

For Two-year or Junior College Attendance:

A credit of \$500 will be posted to the student's ledger account for each full, spring or fall, semester that is completed in accordance with the student's contract/agreement concerning grade point and hours completed.

A maximum credit of \$250 will be posted to the student's ledger account for completion of six (6) hours or more of course completion during summer terms between first and second years.

For Vocational-Technical School Attendance:

For each six (6) months of study/course time required to complete a vocational-educational study plan in accordance with the student's contract/agreement, a maximum of \$500 will be credited to the student's ledger account.

For Specialty and Trade School Attendance:

For a training/course period lasting 3-6 months, a maximum of \$500 will be credited to the student's ledger account if completed in accordance with the student's contract/agreement. If the course/training lasts more than 6 months, an additional \$500 will be credited to the student's ledger account for each additional 6-month period or portion thereof after the initial 6-months are completed.

For GED Training:

For attending GED courses, completing and passing the final GED examination and receiving the GED Certificate according to the terms of the student's contract/agreement, a maximum of \$750 will be credited to the student's ledger account.

Under no circumstance will the total credited to any student's incentive ledger account exceed \$4750.

PAYMENT OF ACCUMULATED INCENTIVE CREDITS:

A payment of the accumulated incentive credits may occur at one of the three following times:

1. The educational course is completed.
2. The student's 21st birthday occurs.
3. The student withdraws from the educational course. Credit will be given up to the last full semester or course completed.

The student's case must be closed and notification forwarded to the Independent Living Unit Manager. The Unit Manager will confirm and verify the total accumulated incentive as recorded in the ledger account for that student and notify, in writing, the Chief Financial Officer for the Division of Children and Family Services of the client name, case number, address and the amount of the state warrant to be issued in payment.

Once an incentive accumulation has been verified and paid and the case closed, no other educational incentives may be accumulated for and paid to the student. If a student continues in a post-secondary educational plan after receiving their GED, they may continue to accumulate credit until one of the above three occurrences takes place.

Medicaid Option:

Arkansas did consider the option in regards to youth that remained in foster after their 18th birthday, but the number was so low that it was not significant. At this time, Arkansas does not offer this option nor has plans to offer this option due to the low number of youth that is impacted. Arkansas plans to research and consider those youth aging out of care in regards to this option over the next year.

10. Educational and Training Vouchers (ETV)

Arkansas contracts with the Orphan Foundation of America to administer the ETV grant.

We have continued to work to expand utilization of the ETV program by using various avenues to inform eligible youth of its availability. Efforts have included working with colleges and other institutions of post secondary education to include information about ETV on their web sites, working with Workforce Education representatives, and insuring that our independent Living Coordinators are knowledgeable about the program. We have been successful and have more applicants that can be fully funded for assistance. Arkansas ETV funded 88 youth in post-secondary pursuits in 2007 at a total cost of \$272,077 and an average of \$3,092 per student.

APSR STATS - May 22, 2008

Chafee Expenditures FFY 2004/2005 (end 9-30-05)	\$764,776.00
*Room and Board for FFY 2004/2005 10.5%	\$80,872.00
Chafee Expenditures FFY 2005/2006 (end 9-30-06)	\$771,514.00
*Room and Board for FFY 2005/2006	N/A
Chafee Expenditures FFY 2006/2007 (end 9-30-07)	\$796,126.00
*Room and Board for FFY 2006/2007	N/A
Chafee Expenditures FFY 2007/2008 (end 9-30-08)	\$835,131.00
*Room and Board for FFY 2007/2008	N/A
ETV Expenditures FFY 2004/2005 (end 9-30-05)	\$249,575.00
ETV Expenditures FFY 2005/2006 (end 9-30-06)	\$263,647.00
ETV Expenditures FFY 2006/2007 (end 9-30-07)	\$272,077.00
ETV Expenditures FFY 2007/2008 (end 9-30-08)	\$285,903.00
ETV Applications in FFY 2004/2005	96
ETV Approved Applications 2004/2005	91
ETV Funded applications 2004/2005**	85
New Applications 2004/2005	46
ETV Applications in FFY 2005/2006	108
ETV Approved Applications 2005/2006	96
ETV Funded applications 2005/2006**	81
New Applications 2005/2006	23
ETV Applications in FFY 2006/2007	158
ETV Approved Applications 2006/2007	146
ETV Funded applications 2006/2007**	88
New Applications 2006/2007	31

ETV Applications in FFY 2007/2008	153
ETV Approved Applications 2007/2008	109
ETV Funded applications 2007/2008**	82
New Applications 2007/2008	19
FFY 2008/2009 Applications Expected to be Funded	82
FFY 2008/2009 Expected ETV Funds	\$300,260.00
FFY 2008/2009 Requested Additional Funds	\$0.00

* Room and board expenditures include funds spent for rent, rental deposits, utilities, utility deposits, food and housekeeping start-up items for youth who have aged out of care but have not yet reached the age of 21. No data is available for FFY2006 and 2007

** The per-student average funding for Arkansas ETV is less than the \$5000 cost-of-attendance maximum allowable each year.

2004/2005 = \$2936
2005/2006 = \$3255
2006/2007 = \$3092
2007/2008 = \$3487 (to date)

11. Financial and Statistical Information Reporting

Status:

Family Preservation – 27.3%

Family Support – 27.5%

Time Limited Reunification – 25.3%

Adoption Promotion – 1%

In regards to the Adoption portion being less than the required 20%, the Division utilizes other funding sources for the Adoption needs of the Division. In 2009 it is anticipated the Division will utilize funding from the Social Services Block Grant, Adoption Coalition, Adoption Incentive and Wendy's Wonderful Kids Grant for adoption services. In addition an exciting Foster Care Church Initiative has rapidly emerged as churches are partnering with each other as well as the Arkansas DHS' Division of Children and Family Services. The initiative is named *The C.A.L.L.* -- *Children of Arkansas Loved for a Lifetime*. The C.A.L.L. is self funded so the Division receives the benefit of having our children adopted and placed in a forever home with much of the expense being borne by the CALL. In addition the C.A.L.L. is responsible for the training of the families and the completion of home studies. The C.A.L.L. is currently located in two counties within the state and we are looking at the expansion of the program in three additional counties and hope to eventually take this initiative statewide.

Section D: Supporting Information:

1. Juvenile Justice Transfer

During the reporting period, fifty (50) DCFS foster children had placements in the Division of Youth Services (Juvenile Justice System). In all concurrent cases, a multi-disciplinary team staffing is held within twenty-one (21) days of the youth's commitment to determine the child's comprehensive treatment plan that includes community reintegration. The system allows youth to retain their DCFS caseworker with a Division of Youth Services case tracker. DCFS and the Division of Youth Services have entered into a formal agreement to provide the best possible services to the youth of Arkansas and their families, and provide a joint working relationship between the two agencies.

2. Inter-Country Adoptions:

No children met the criteria for a disrupted or dissolved inter-country adoption for fiscal year 2008 (July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.)

3. Child Welfare Demonstrations:

Our Mission with Wendy's Wonderful Kid's is a child specific recruitment initiative. All children in Pulaski County who meet the established criteria will have an opportunity to be selected for the Wendy's Wonderful Kids Project. Twenty (20) of these children will be selected at random for the project. Twelve (12) children will be selected initially and within three months the remaining eight will be added to the caseload. The criteria for children on the caseload are as follows:

1. Be Caucasian, nine years of age or older;
2. Be a child of color, two years of age or older;
3. Be members of a sibling group of three or more being placed together;
4. Have severe medical or psychological needs that require ongoing rehabilitation or treatment.

The total amount of the grant award is \$65,000.

The Division of Children and Family Services was awarded a Subcontract by Northrop Grumman who through SAMHSA funding to improve the short and long term functioning of preschool age children with a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and in state custody due to dependent abuse or neglect. The project will do

this by: 1) providing early and timely screening and diagnosis for FASD among all children ages 0-5 in state custody in Pulaski County; 2) providing and communicating comprehensive, coordinated and timely case planning, case management, services, and follow-up to insure appropriate care for children with FASD and their families; 3) recruiting foster families in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of children in foster care; 4) insuring providers and caregivers have up-to-date, scientific information on diagnosing and caring for children/families with an FASD; 5) facilitating stable home environments with no more than one placement change in 12 months for dependent children with an FASD; 6) enacting system improvements based on ongoing project findings; and 7) sustaining the effective components of the Pulaski County FASD project. As part of the planning for sustainability, the DCFS and partners plan to expand successful project components to other populations of children at risk for FASD and in other counties of Arkansas. The primary partners in this effort are the Pulaski County Juvenile Court System, UAMS, and DCFS.

This is a subcontract award for \$1,061,183.694 is for 4 years and 10 months.

4. Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment:

ADOPTION RECRUITMENT PLAN

FFYS 2005 –2009

Progress Report

Introduction

In June 2004, Arkansas had a pool of one hundred ninety-six (196) approved families waiting for children. Of that 196, 52 or 27% were African-American and 144 or 73% were White. The percentage of African American families has increased from 22% in the FFYS 2000-2004 recruitment plan.

Arkansas had four hundred ninety-eight (498) children waiting to be adopted at the end of SFY 2004. Seventy-six or 15% of these children are living in pre adoptive homes. Four hundred twenty two children with parental rights terminated were not placed in adoptive homes. Twenty six per cent of the children available for adoption were African American. Sixty three per cent were Caucasian

At the end of June 2004, there were 3,241 children in foster care, 58% white, 30% African-American, 7% more than one race, and 4% Hispanic. Ages were 25% between the ages of 6 –11, 23% between the ages of 12 – 15, 21% between the ages of 2 – 5, 18% between the ages of 16 – 18, 10% between the ages of 0 – 1 and 1% 18 or older. 50% of these children are male and 50% are female.

Given the characteristics of children described above and the families available for placement, the Division of Children and Family Services will use the strategies outlined in this plan to locate and develop adoptive home resources to meet the needs of waiting children.

Goal I: To improve DCFS' general adoption recruitment and retention efforts

Objective 1: To increase awareness and education of all DCFS/DCO clerical staff concerning adoption.

Task 1: Feature a waiting child or sibling group in the DHS newsletter.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished. The first waiting child was featured in the DHHS newsletter in November 2005 and is ongoing.

Task 2: Develop statewide curriculum and provide training for DCFS/DCO clerical staff on the new web-based adoption inquiry process.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was not accomplished. Having clerical staff enter an inquiry via the adoption web site is still being considered. The training curriculum developed for DCFS Field Staff will be utilized to train DCFS/DCO Clerical. Change Lead responsibility to Community Support/Adoption Services and Secondary Responsibility to Adoption Supervisors and County Administrators. Change accomplish date to December 31, 2006.

Status: Efforts are underway, but more time is needed to appropriately accomplish this task. During January – March 2007, MidSouth Training Academy initiated the series of training from Spaulding Special Needs Adoption Curriculum. Adoption Specialists, Adoption Supervisors, and two Adoption Managers attended the initial training on January 17, 2007. These training sessions have been sporadic with the last one January 28, 2008. MidSouth Training Academy has continued to develop a training curriculum for new Adoption Specialists. Wendy's Wonderful Kids. Recruiter attended the summit held by the Dave Thomas Foundation for the grant renewed to DCFS. Planning began for a statewide adoption conference in November 2007 (sponsored by the private sector, DCFS has a representative on the planning committee and is to provide monies for the keynote speaker and some stipends for DCFS adoptive families). The Conference was held in October, 2007. One Adoption staff member and two adoptive parents attended the North American Council on Adoptable Children Conference in July, 2007. One Adoption Manager and one Foster Care Manager attended the Child Welfare League of America's Adoption and Foster Care Conference in New Orleans December 10-12, 2007. Change accomplish date to September 20, 2008.

Objective 2: To promote awareness and education among community organizations

Task 1: Develop a statewide plan for awareness and education on adoption.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished. A statewide Adoption Recruitment Plan was developed in January 2005. Lead Responsibility: Adoption Services Unit/Adoption Field Services Manager

Task 2: Develop area plans for awareness and education on adoption.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was not accomplished in all the Adoption Field Service Areas. Task has not been accomplished at this time in all the Adoption field Service Areas
Change accomplish date to September 30, 2006.

Task 3: Utilize support groups, speakers bureaus, faith-based groups and other community groups.
Accomplish Date: September 30, 2008

Status: This task has been accomplished and will be on going. All adoption Field Area Field Services Areas have created at least one community based Adoption Coalition to recruit and support adoptive families. The Central Area and a portion of Southeast Area have initiated the C.A.L.L and other areas are will be following

Objective 3: To explore post-adoption services

Task 1: Mail letters regarding the availability of post-adoption services to subsidized adoptive families and foster families
Accomplish Date: January 1, 2007

Status: Letters and brochures were mailed to subsidized adoptive families in June 2006. The brochures were included in the letter and survey on post adoption services. Brochures were mailed to foster families in June, 2008.

Task 2: Complete a survey with adoptive families on the need for post-adoption services
Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished in June 2006. A post adoption survey was forwarded to subsidized adoptive families.

Task 3: Use results of post-adoption services survey findings to develop and expand post-adoption services.
Accomplish Date: September 30, 2006

Status: Approximately, 270 surveys have been returned. The Planning Unit with DHHS/DCFS will be contacted during the next quarter to determine if they can analyze the surveys.

Objective 4: To monitor the progress of the Adoption Recruitment

Plan on a quarterly basis

Task 1: Utilize the monitoring tool to monitor progress of recruitment efforts.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished. A progress report form was developed by the Division of Children and Family Services in order to obtain information. Task was accomplished since a tool for monitoring progress of recruitment efforts was developed during a previous CFSP period.

Goal II: To provide targeted recruitment efforts to find homes for waiting children

Objective 1: Each Adoption Specialist will recruit and retain a minimum of ten (10) African American families per year for the next five (5) years (Exception: If the geographical area of one of the Adoption Specialists has less than 5% African American population their minimum number may be adjusted accordingly, but the statewide total will supplement the reduced number).

Task 1: Include in Area Recruitment Plan, the plan for recruiting and retaining African American homes to address this objective.

Accomplish Dates: **September 30, 2005 – 10 Families**

September 30, 2006 – 10 Families

September 30, 2007 - 10 Families

September 30, 2008 – 10 Families

September 30, 2009 – 10 Families

Status: Task was not accomplished by September 30, 2005 in each of the five adoptive service areas. There were a total of 53 homes statewide recruited and retained. In FFY, 2006 there were a total of 59 home statewide recruited and retained. In FFY 2007 ending

September, 2007, there are currently 47 homes statewide recruited and retained. In FFY 2008, 10-01-07 thru 5-31-08, 62 homes statewide were recruited and retained

Task 2: Coordinate and develop media presentations, written materials, and information packets (to include information related to home study process and agency access) to recruit African American families.

Accomplish Date: **September 30, 2005 and on-going**

Status: All five Adoption Field Service Areas have accomplished this task. The Northeast Adoption Field Service Area, the Central Adoption Field Service Area, and the Southwest Adoption Field Service Area and the Southeast Field Service Area have accomplished this task primarily via the Adoption Coalition Grant (federal grant).

Task 3: Establish working relationships with a minimum of ten (10) local community based groups each year per Area.

Accomplish Dates: **September 30, 2005 - 10 Groups**

September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups

September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups

September 30, 2008 – 10 Groups

September 30, 2009 – 10 Groups

Status: The Northeast Adoption Field Services Area, Central Adoption Field Services Area, and Southwest Adoption Field Services Area accomplished the task by September 30, 2005. The Southeast Adoption Field Services Area has now

accomplished this task . These Areas are presently increasing the number of relationships with community-based groups primarily via the Adoption Coalitions (federal grant). The Northwest Adoption Field Services Area has now accomplished this task. These groups also are primarily via the Adoption Coalition

Task 4: Develop and maintain at least one adoption support group in each Area.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished in the Northeast Adoption Field Service Area, which currently has five (5) active adoption support groups. The Southwest, Northwest, Southeast, and the Central Adoption Field Service Areas have at least one (1) joint Foster Parent/Adoption Support group.

Objective 2: Recruit and retain adoptive families for teens, children with severe disabilities, and sibling groups of three or more.

Task 1: Coordinate and develop media presentations, written materials, and information packets (to include information related to the home study process and agency access) to recruit adoptive families for teens, children with severe disabilities, and sibling groups of three (3) or more.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: The Northeast, Southeast, Central, and Southwest Adoption Field Service Areas have accomplished this task. The Northwest Adoption Field Service Area has accomplished a portion of the task. They have not coordinated and developed media

presentations. **This task has now been accomplished in the Northwest Field Service Area.**

Task 2: Establish working relationships with a minimum of ten (10) local community based groups, for teen recruitment each year per Area.

Accomplish Dates: **September 30, 2005 - 10 Groups**

September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups

September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups

September 30, 2008 – 10 Groups

September 30, 2009 – 10 Groups

Status: Task was accomplished in the Southeast, Northeast, Southwest, and Central Adoption Field Services Area; however, the Northwest Field Service Area has developed a working relationship with (8) groups. The Northwest Field Service Area has now developed accomplished this task with the implementation of the Adoption Coalitions in their area.

Task 3: Establish and maintain at least one post adoption service per Area

Accomplish Date: **September 30, 2006**

Status: Task has been accomplished. The Northeast Adoption Field Services Area has accomplished this task by establishing parent support groups, lending resource library (each Adoption Specialist's office), and a newsletter. The other four adoption management areas have established a lending resource library (each Adoption Specialist's office).

Goal 3: To identify and recruit appropriate adoptive families for specific waiting children

Objective 1: Complete a web site and photo-listing registration on all waiting children with special needs.

Task 1: Identify children with special needs who are legally free for adoption, are not placed with an adoptive family, and are not registered on the DCFS web site and photo-listing.

Accomplish Date: **September 30, 2005 and on-going**

Status: All the Adoption Field Services Areas have accomplished this task by identifying the children with special needs who are legally free for adoption, are not placed with an adoptive family, and are not registered on the DCFS web site and photo listing. The areas continue to monitor this on going task.

Task 2: Prepare web site and photo-listing registration packets on the waiting children.

Accomplish Date: **September 30, 2005 and on-going**

Status: Task was not accomplished in the all Adoption Field Service Areas by September 30, 2005, however, registration packets were prepared on twenty-six (26) new profiles of waiting children by September 30, 2005, and twenty (20) new profiles were added by December 30, 2005. From January, 2006 thru May, 2006, thirty-five (35) new profiles of waiting children were added. The task is now completed, and areas are maintaining this on going task.

Task 3: Enter the registration of waiting children onto the web site and photo-listing.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: This task was not accomplished on all waiting children in the Adoption Field Service Areas by September 30, 2005, however, registration packets were forwarded and registrations completed on twenty-six (26) new profiles of waiting children by September 30, 2005 and twenty (20) new profiles were added by December 30, 2005. From January, 2006 thru May, 2006, thirty-five (35) new profiles of waiting children were added. This on going task is being maintained.

Objective 2: Develop placement resources with private and public agencies for waiting children with special needs.

Task 1: Develop a network with private and public agencies to increase the resource of approved adoptive applicants for waiting children with special needs.

Accomplish Date: October 1, 2005 and on-going

Status: This task has been accomplished in that the following activities have been initiated: (1) private agencies are participating in some of the Adoption Coalitions; (2) participation with private agencies in providing a statewide biannual adoption conference; (3) participation with private agencies at adoption information fairs; (4) providing consultation to private agency staff and families regarding the adoption subsidy program; and (5) the acceptance of approved adoption home studies from private agencies and other public agencies for registration in the “matching” database. This task has been accomplished and is ongoing. Approved adoption home studies have continued to be accepted from other public and private adoption agencies, particularly as a result of families viewing registrations of waiting children on the DHHS/DCFS adoption web site, AdoptUSKids, and Adoption.com. The private sector continues to be involved in the Adoption Coalitions (Adoption Opportunity Grant) to recruit and support adoptive families. DHHS/DCFS was awarded a \$65,000.00 recruitment grant during February 2007 from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Wendy’s Wonderful Kids, to serve Pulaski County, Area VI. This grant was renewed for this current fiscal year. Planning for the bi-annual statewide adoption conference began in January 2007 (sponsored by the private sector, DHHS/DCFS staff serves on the planning committee) and was held in October, 2007. DHHS/DCFS participated with various types of public and private agencies in the Black Expo in Pulaski County in February, 2008 by hosting an information booth about foster parenting and adoption. The C.A.L.L. (Children of Arkansas Loved for a Lifetime) was established as result of the Fellowship Summit held during the previous quarter (faith based project involving approximately seventeen churches to recruit, train, complete home studies with prospective foster and adoptive families and to provide support after placement).

Task 2: Develop recommendations for purchase of service for the adoption of specific waiting children with special needs.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was not accomplished by September 30, 2005 but recommendations were completed on June 12, 2006. Task has not completely been accomplished. Recommendations (policy/procedures) were completed in June 2006 and revised that same month. No further actions were taken during the quarter from January – March 2007. The DHHS/DCFS Assistant Director for Finance will be contacted to determine if monies are available for a purchase of service program to pay private adoption agency fees. The recommendations must also be presented to the new DHHS/DCFS Director.

There is not policy for an across the board purchase of service program at this, but each referral is considered on as needed basis.

Objective 3: Implement a child specific recruitment plan

Task 1: Complete a child specific recruitment form on every waiting child.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: Task was not accomplished. All areas are working on this task. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2007. This task was not completed by September 30, 2007. Although not all waiting children have formalized written child specific recruitment plans, informal recruitment plans are being utilized. The areas continue to work on completing written recruitment plans on all waiting children.

Objective 4: Identify and utilize available community resources to find families for specific waiting children with special needs.

Task 1: Identify during concurrent planning families who have significant ties to a waiting child and determine if it is appropriate to consider the families for adoption placement.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: This task was not accomplished. Change the accomplish date to September 30, 2008. This task is being researched to determine the appropriate service unit for primary responsibility.

Task 2: Plan and implement at least five activities during the federal fiscal year to recruit adoptive families for specific waiting children per Area.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: All adoption field service areas exceeded five activities during the federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2005 with an exception of the Northwest Adoption

Field Service Area. Northwest has established an Adoption Coalition and in the process of planning activities. The Northwest area has now accomplished this task. Task was completed November, 2007.

Foster Parent Recruitment Plan

The Foster Parent Recruitment Plan is reported by the Resource Workers in the DCFS 10 Areas:

Goal: Recruit Foster Families in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of children in foster care.

Objective 1: Increase awareness and education of DCFS and DHHS staff concerning foster care needs.

Area 1

- Met with DCFS staff in the 2 larger counties regarding recruitment needs and answered their questions
- We also went over homes that have too many children and why not to overload foster homes. Discuss how plan on moving children from the overloaded home to get foster homes back in compliance.

Area 2

- Inquiry Meeting dates are posted
- Schedule of Inquiry Meetings is sent to offices

Area 3

- Area training on Provisional Families

Area 4

- Begging for support from DCFS staff
- DCO staff attends and participates in Child Abuse Awareness activities in April
- DCO/DHS staff good at referring interested parties to Resource Staff

Area 5

- Resource Workers attend Supervisor and Quarterly Meetings to update staff

Area 6

- DCFS staff has brought in several provisional families
- Word of mouth by DCFS staff

Area 7

- Attend Area VII staff meetings and present needs
- Provisional Notebooks are handed out to caseworkers to recruit

Area 8

- **Hold monthly meetings with staff**
- **Provisional Packets are handed out to staff to recruit**

Area 9

- **Attend DCFS Staff Meetings and area meetings**
- **Provide training on provisional family recruitment**
- **Send emails to supervisors and workers about upcoming inquiry meetings and post them**
- **Have staff attend inquiry meetings when possible and involve them in events such as balloon releases for National Foster Care Month**

Area 10

- **Meet with Supervisors and speak at Area meetings**
- **Created brochure to give to DCFS to hand out**
- **Collaborate with CQI members in regards to Foster Care needs**

Objective 2: Enlist the support of DCFS Foster Parents to assist in recruitment efforts.

Area 1

- **Foster Parent Association members bring in recruitments**
- **Foster Parent Association members bring in recruitments. We have a foster parent that is a trainer for the new foster parents. She is able to answer a lot of questions and concerns due to her experience of having foster children in her home. Have a foster parent attend inquiry meetings.**

Area 2

- **Foster Parents attend Inquiry Meetings**
- **Word of mouth**
- **FP's who are teachers post Inquiry Meeting notices at schools**
- **Our foster parents talk a lot at their churches have made arrangements to have flyers put in their bulletins.**

Area 3

- **Give out business cards to FP's to hand out**
- **Word of mouth through foster parents' churches/workplaces**

Area 4

- **FP's set up booths**
- **FP's host events and are given info to give out**
- **Have provided "Each One - Tell One" pamphlets to foster parents**

- Encourage to invite interested individuals to foster parent support group meetings

Area 5

- Foster Parents from 1 church brought in 4 more families
- Word of mouth

Area 6

- Strong leadership in Foster Parent Association'
- FP's who work in hospitals post Inquiry Meeting info

Area 7

- The CALL in Lonoke Co
- FP Associations
- "Each 1 Tell 1" brochures left with newly opened FP homes

Area 8

- Foster Parent Association is active
- Every other month, guests are brought to FP Association meetings
- Foster Parents speak on the radio

Area 9

- Foster Parents trained on recruitment
- Fliers are placed at employers
- FP's are members of Kiwanis club
- Inform foster parents of inquiry meetings and send them flyers to post or distribute
- Use foster parents as an in to speak at different organization such as Kiwanis and local churches
- Give foster parents materials to hand out i.e. each one, tell one and foster care ribbons
- Involve foster parent associations in having a bring a friend night
- Have the foster parents attend and help plan events for National Foster Care Month

Area 10

- FP Association meetings and Inquiry Meetings are held together
- Packets are given out by Foster Parents

Objective 3: Increase awareness and education of the community concerning foster care needs.

Area 1

- We had an inquiry meeting at a church, who broadcasted the inquiry meeting date and time to other churches and over the radio. Ongoing newspaper ads as well as putting each one tell ones in a variety of different places.

Area 2

- Just this month we went to all the schools in Fort Smith (27 schools) and put letters about the need for foster parents and contact sheets in all the teachers mail boxes. Over time this will be done in all the schools throughout our area. During the summer months we intend to do this at the factories, resale shops, etc. We have had and will have again info on the radio and newspapers.

Area 3

- Running monthly ad in local paper (Garland) stating the need and date of inquiry meeting.
- At least twice yearly, we have conducted "mail out" to area schools/churches asking to include Each One Tell One in bulletin and offering to come speak to a group, which has lead to speaking at Kiwanis Club in Garland and Lions Club in Hot Spring counties
- Provide Each One Tell One at inquiry meetings and encourage those who attended to share with others, even if they decide fostering is not right for them at this time.

Area 4

- Articles in local paper
- Child Abuse Awareness activities are held in most counties; includes speakers, flyers, and media coverage
- Radio interviews and announcements

Area 5

- Share information with the news media about foster care and the need for foster parents. Talk with CASA who also works to give info to prospective volunteers or others interested in foster care.

Area 6

- Informing the public of the needs and criteria to become foster parents through Talk Shows such as Comcast a community notification channel
- Radio/newspaper announcements

Area 7

- Attending county events and fairs
- Speaking engagements with community groups
- Giving the school's information to handout for people interested in fostering
- Speaking at meetings with the school regarding DCFS, Child Abuse, and the need for foster parents

Area 8

- We do some public service announcements on radio--once a week a former foster parent is on a morning talk show (radio). CASA gets us an occasional ad in the newspaper.

Area 9

- Speak at different functions about the need for foster homes and educate the public on how and why kids enter foster care. This is done as a team effort in area 9. There are several supervisors that speak at different meetings or churches, and even when they may be speaking about child abuse, they also bring information for foster care. There is even an OCC attorney that have made numerous speeches at local churches. Set up booths at local children's health and safety fair with brochures about foster care and materials about child abuse. Hold inquiry meetings and invite the public to learn more about foster care and adoptions. Host events to raise awareness in the community about the number of children in foster care. This has been done through balloon releases and ribbon tying ceremonies. Pictures of these events are accompanied by an article in the paper telling the public about the need and directing them to the website or local office to learn more.

Objective 4: Support Area and County staff recruitment plans and efforts.

Area 1

- Provide a direct contact person for applicants to contact if they have questions. Getting applicants to training quickly and not have any time lapses in between in home consults and back ground checks being completed by Little Rock. Also the resource worker works with Midsouth on getting applicants into training in and around our area.

Area 2

- Staff is working at provisional home possibilities.

Area 3

- Provided Provisional Packets to make easier on Workers to make the referral to Resource and to get background checks started.
- Resource attends Area meetings
- Provide recruitment material to Workers (when we had some, but now we are out) when they are planning to attend ballgames, church events, etc. to provide those materials to public.

Area 4

- Some counties attend and conduct Inquiry Meetings
- RW's meet with supervisors and attend staff meetings to discuss issues
- County staff participate by mailing flyers to churches and handing out flyers in the community

- County staff attend adoption coalition meetings and take an active part in planned activities
- Host recruitment events that bring awareness of the need for foster parents
- Recruitment plans developed for individual counties
- Developed commercials for local TV stations-County Supervisors
- Radio/newspaper interviews conducted with DCFS staff
- Receive telephone inquiries of interested applicants and provide to RW

Area 5

- One of the Pope county case workers attended a community meeting to share information about foster care.

Area 6

- County offices are assisting w/recruitment through churches, schools, doctor offices etc.
- Recruitment through Relatives (Provisional Placement)
- Website

Area 7

- Meet with County Supervisors regarding the types of foster parents needed in the county
- Attend County meetings with the Supervisor and the workers

Area 8

- None recently but in the past we have done flyers in bank statements and church bulletin.

Area 9

- County supervisors and workers are asked to give feedback on what types of homes are needed most. The area and county plans are a collaborative effort, and everyone works together to try and obtain these homes.

Area 10

- Distributing Foster Care Packets in each DHS county office
- Offering Team Building Trainings (i.e. utilize scheduled Area Meetings)
- Research ways to help foster parents obtain professional training that is in reasonably, close proximity to providers and that will equip foster parents/other providers with the skills needed to meet the needs of all types of foster children.

Objective 5: Coordinate with Adoption Recruitment.

Area 1

- Adoption specialist attends Inquiry Meetings. The resource worker is assigned to complete all foster, foster to adopt and adopt only in home

consults, background checks, and whatever else they need to get them into training.

Area 2

- The resource team attends the adoption coalition and has been active with the heart gallery - helping to move it, put it up, and finding places to display it. Also, the resource team is working with the adoption coalition on an awareness picnic at the Alma water park this Thursday. The resource team has passed out approximately 1,000 flyers advertising this. We also are donating refreshments along with being there to answer questions involving fostering. The adoption coalition was nice enough to call this event Foster/Adopt Awareness Picnic.

Area 3

- Adoption Specialist encouraged to attend all inquiry meetings and invite their adoptive families.
- Coordinate speaking events that are scheduled, so that Resource and Adoption Specialist can attend.
- Include adoption brochure with all fostering information handed out.
- We make sure to share background check results with each other for those folks that want to do both, so that checks are not unnecessarily repeated.
- Attend some in-homes with the Adoption Specialist for folks interested in both.

Area 4

- Coordinate recruitment with Golden Triangle Adoption Coalition
- Enlist support of foster/adoptive parents to assist in recruitment activities

Area 5

- The resource staff works with the adoption specialist to work together in the inquiry meetings. Workers share information about adoptions with all interested in foster or adoption.

Area 6

- Inquiry Meetings are jointly held monthly.
- Foster Parents recruiting Foster Parents
- Partnering with Adoptions to provide Booth coverage to educate the public on the needs and how to become foster and adoptive parents.

Area 7

- Invite Adoption Specialists to all inquiry meetings and any other special events
- When adoption specialists are unable to attend inquiry meetings or any other special event...hand out information for them

Area 8

- **Resource Unit and Adoption Unit in Area 8 is now one unit---we all work together**

Area 9

- **Inquiry meetings are completed together with resource and adoption staff. When recruiting for foster care, the need for adoptive homes is also talked about.**
- **Encouraging participation from Adoption Specialist to attend Inquiry/New Orientation/Foster Parent Association Meetings**
- **Conducting data entries for Adoption/Foster Care inquiry intakes**
- **Scheduling CPR/First Aid Trainings for Adoption/Foster Care Applicants**
- **Maintaining open lines of communication with Adoption Specialists**

5. Adoption Incentive Payments:

According to the February 17, 2004 announcement from ACF, incentives payments will be calculated using three separate baselines: one for the total number of children adopted from the public foster care system; one for special needs adoptions of children under the age of nine; and the other for adoptions of children age nine and older. The incentive numbers are compiled from AFCARS data and are based upon the federal fiscal year.

For the increase in the number of adoptions over the baseline for the State's total number of adoptions, the State will receive a \$4,000 bonus for each child.

For the increase in the number of adoptions over the baseline for children age nine and older, the State will receive an additional \$4,000 bonus for each child.

For each special needs adoption of a child under age nine, the State will receive an additional \$2,000 bonus for each child.

In FY 2003, the baselines for all three groups were FY 2002 adoptions. For subsequent fiscal years, the baseline is set at the highest number of adoptions for each group between FY 2002 and the previous year. The new incentives became effective at the beginning of FY 2004 through FY 2008.

The state of Arkansas has received incentive monies which were used for the following purposes:

- Post adoption services such as respite care, tutoring, training, and resource lending library
- Promotional materials for recruitment and public awareness activities
- Adoption Home Studies
- Adoption Summaries
- Non-identifying summaries
- Support Groups

If placement goals and objectives are met the division will receive incentive awards through FFY2008.

Arkansas will receive an incentive award for the increase in finalized adoptions in FY 2006. Arkansas did not receive exceed the baseline for special needs and older children and will not receive the incentive award.

Financial Information-

1. Payment Limitations

Historical for Arkansas Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) expenditures for Title IV-B subpart 2 were \$1,909,803 in the fiscal year 1992 base year. In comparison, DCFS spent \$12, 783, 914 in fiscal year 2006.

Financial Information-attached

- 2. FFY 2008 Revised Budget Request**
- 3. FFY 2009 Budget Request**
- 4. FFY 2006 Annual Expenditures**
- 5. Financial Status Reports, SF 269**